the Vampire Slayer™
VAMPYR

Buffy the Vampire Slayer™

SEASON 10 VOLUME 1

Praise for the stories contained in this volume:

"The fandom is lucky to experience the beginning of a new season that's growing into one of the most original and skillfully constructed eras of the series. I can't wait to see what's to come."

—*Bloody Disgusting*

"This is such a faithful addition to the *Buffy* canon, it makes me weep. All 'continuations' from long-gone series should be this good. If you're not a *Buffy* fan, get on board and join the drama and insanity. Highest possible recommendation."

—*SciFiPulse*

"Between the humor that comes from the strong cast of characters, to Gage's on-point writing, to Isaacs's superb art, and Allie's experience in keeping true to the *Buffy* mythos while still allowing creative teams to be unique, this entire team promises what looks to be another fantastic addition to the series."

—*Newsarama*

Buffy
the Vampire Slayer™

Buffy the Vampire Slayer™

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SEASON 10 VOLUME 1

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This volume reprints *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Season 10 #1–#10, originally published March through December 2014, from Dark Horse Comics.

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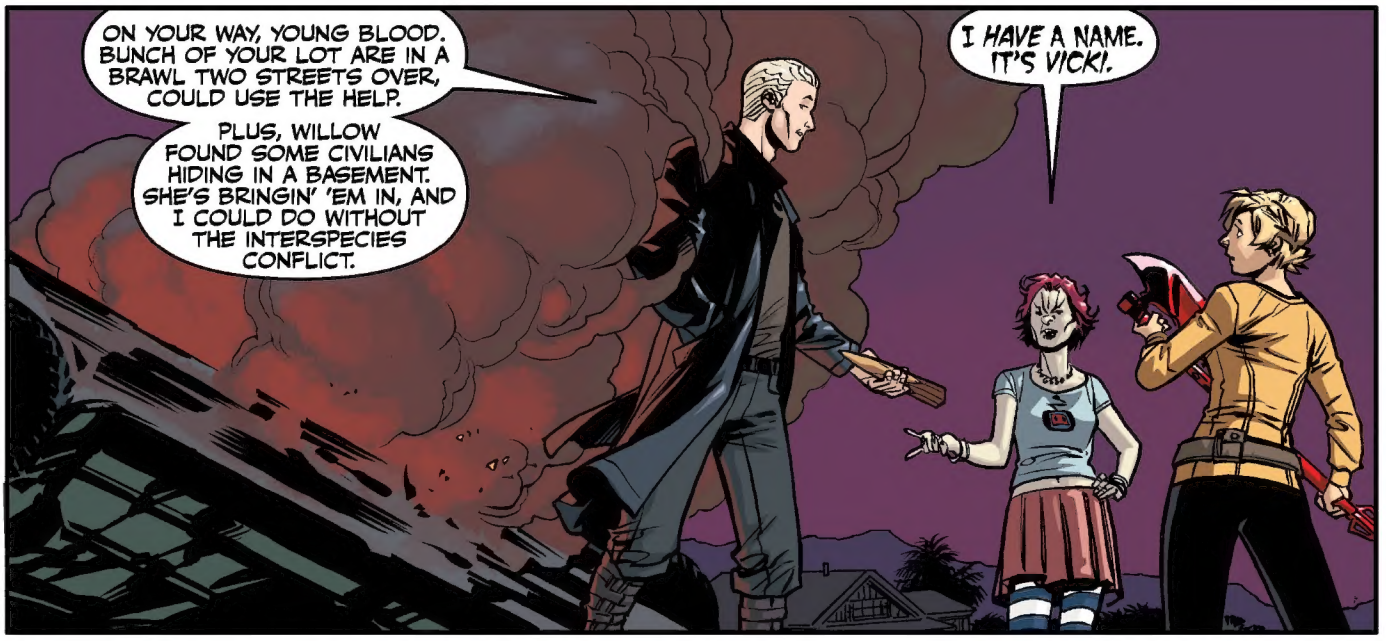
SANTA ROSITA, CALIFORNIA.
SOMETIMES IT'S GOOD TO GET BACK TO BASICS.
GRAAR
I MEAN, I'LL TELL YOU THIS FOR NOTHING--I'VE HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH OF CRISES AND APOCALYPSES AND OLD BOYFRIENDS TURNING INTO MAD GODS.
WE GAVE EARTH BACK ITS MAGIC. STOPPED THE ARMAGEDDON DU JOUR. NOW I'M BACK TO SLAYING THE UNDEAD SO THEY DON'T OVERRUN A SUBURBAN CALIFORNIA TOWN.
IT'S DOWNRIGHT NOSTALGIC.
BUT NOSTALGIA CAN BE DANGEROUS.
YOU GET TOO COMFORTABLE... LET YOUR GUARD DOWN...AND BAD THINGS HAPPEN.
THERE'S A LINE IN ONE OF THE BOOKS GILES USED TO TRY TO GET ME TO READ.
"YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN."

I NEVER DID READ THAT BOOK. KINDA MY M.O.
BUT I THINK I GOT THE GIST.
PAFT

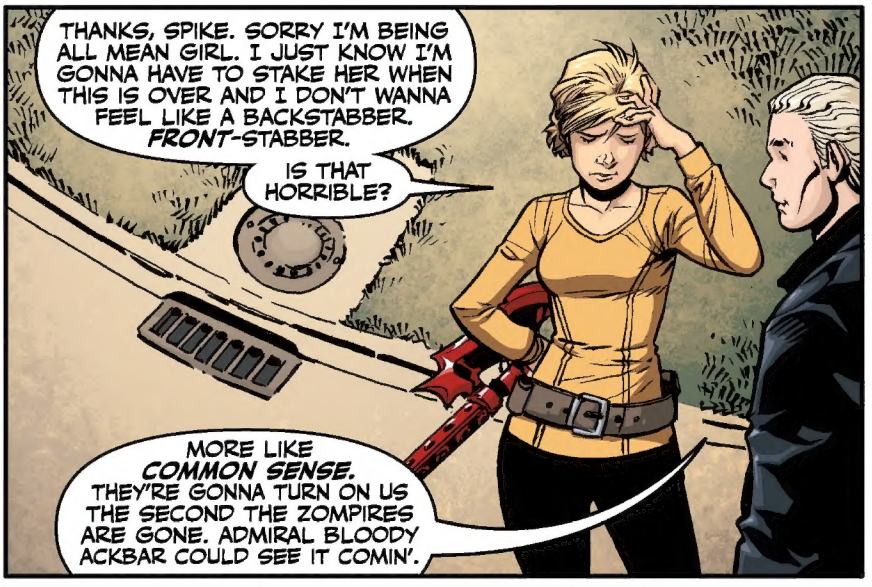
GOT YOUR BACK.
THINGS CHANGE.

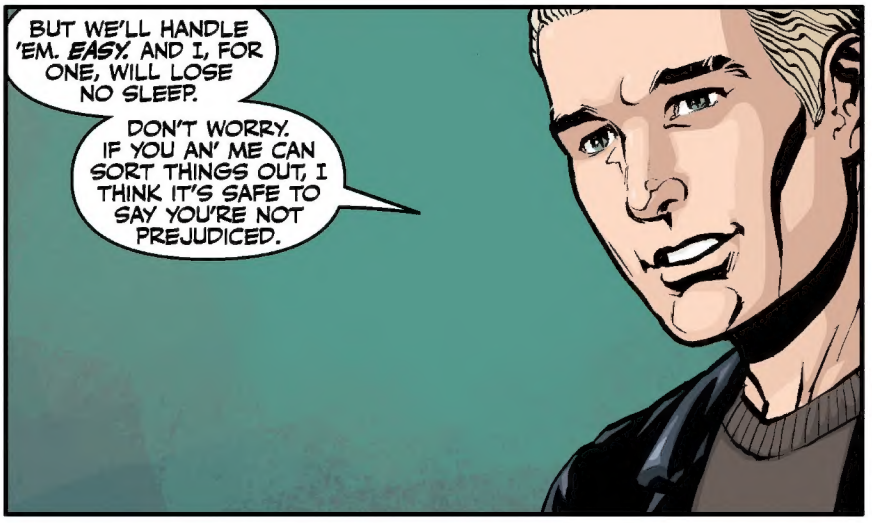
NEW RULES
PART ONE

YOU'RE WELCOME.
WHAT--WE'RE SUPPOSED TO ACT LIKE B.F.F.S NOW?
THIS IS AN "ENEMY OF MY ENEMY" KINDA DEAL. YOU AND YOUR POINTY-TOOTHED POSSE CAME TO ME.
OUR TOWN'S INFESTED WITH THESE MINDLESS ANIMALS 'CAUSE YOU WRECKED MAGIC. YOUR MESS--YOUR CLEANUP.
I KINDA HOPED BRINGING MAGIC BACK WOULD GET PEOPLE TO STOP WITH THE SHAMING.
LOOK, THE STATUS IS ONCE AGAIN QUO. ZOMPIRES ARE NOW A LIMITED EDITION. WHEN THEY'RE GONE, THEY'RE GONE.
SO LET'S JUST TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS AND GO BACK TO THE TRADITIONAL VAMPIRE/SLAYER DYNAMIC, OKAY?
YOUR TRADITION?
SORRY. I'M JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU.
MOUTHY LITTLE--
BRING IT, SKANK!
OI.


ON YOUR WAY, YOUNG BLOOD. BUNCH OF YOUR LOT ARE IN A BRAWL TWO STREETS OVER, COULD USE THE HELP.
PLUS, WILLOW FOUND SOME CIVILIANS HIDING IN A BASEMENT. SHE'S BRINGIN' 'EM IN, AND I COULD DO WITHOUT THE INTERSPECIES CONFLICT.
I *HAVE* A NAME. IT'S *VICKI*.

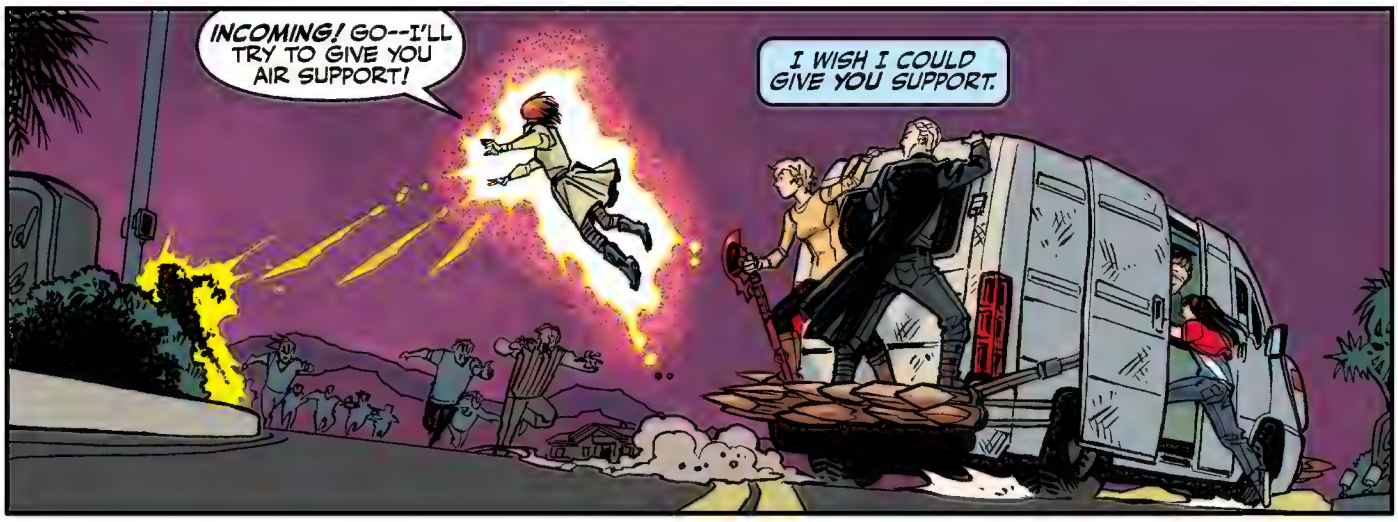
SERIOUSLY? "VICKI THE VAMPIRE"?
RIGHT, BECAUSE "BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER" IS DOWNRIGHT *SHAKESPEAREAN.*


THANKS, SPIKE. SORRY I'M BEING ALL MEAN GIRL. I JUST KNOW I'M GONNA HAVE TO STAKE HER WHEN THIS IS OVER AND I DON'T WANNA FEEL LIKE A BACKSTABBER. *FRONT*-STABBER.
IS THAT HORRIBLE?
MORE LIKE *COMMON SENSE.* THEY'RE GONNA TURN ON US THE SECOND THE ZOMPIRES ARE GONE. ADMIRAL BLOODY ACKBAR COULD SEE IT COMIN'.


BUT WE'LL HANDLE 'EM. *EASY.* AND I, FOR ONE, WILL LOSE NO SLEEP.
DON'T WORRY. IF YOU AN' ME CAN SORT THINGS OUT, I THINK IT'S SAFE TO SAY YOU'RE NOT PREJUDICED.

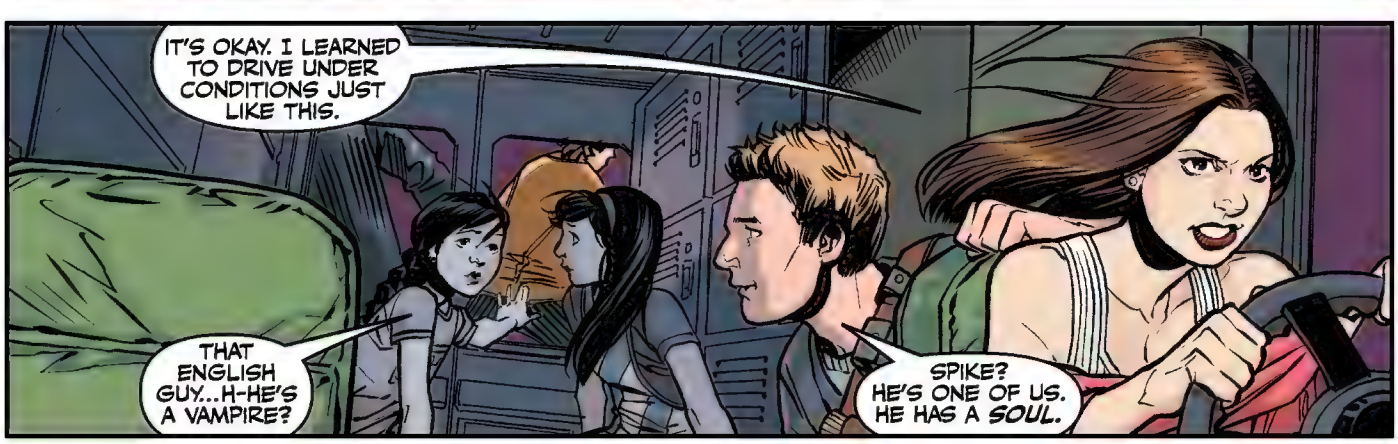
RIGHT. THE SORTING HAS BEEN NICELY SORTED.
UM, DID YOU SAY WILLOW--?
RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

SAY HI TO ABBY AND ZOEY MILLER. THEIR MOM WORKS OUTSIDE THE EVACUATION ZONE. THEY NEED A RIDE ON THE FREEDOM TRAIN.
ALREADY CALLED. VAN'LL BE HERE IN A MINUTE.
CAN'T YOU TAKE US?
I WISH. I'VE GOT A FORCE FIELD AROUND TOWN KEEPING THE MONSTERS IN. IF I TRY TO DO ANOTHER SPELL FOR MORE THAN A MINUTE, EVERYTHING STARTS TO UNRAVEL.
THIS NEW MAGIC'S SO RAW. STRONG, BUT, MAN, CAN IT BURN...
SORRY. SHOP TALK.
DON'T WORRY. MY FRIENDS ARE TOTAL PROS AT THIS KINDA THING.
SCREEECH
COME WITH ME IF YOU WANT TO--
REALLY, ANDREW? YOU'RE GONNA SAY IT EVERY TIME?
OW! THEY HAVEN'T HEARD IT YET. AND I'M THIS CLOSE TO NAILING THE ACCENT.
HI. I'M DAWN. WANNA GET OUT OF HERE?
ARE YOU A SUPER PERSON TOO?
WE'RE ALL SUPER IN OUR OWN WAY. OR SO THE SUPER PEOPLE KEEP TELLING ME. BUT I DO DRIVE REALLY FAST.


INCOMING! GO--I'LL TRY TO GIVE YOU AIR SUPPORT!
I WISH I COULD GIVE YOU SUPPORT.

POOR WILLOW. SHE WAS LOST WHEN MAGIC WENT AWAY. BUT AFTER HER COSMIC WALKABOUT, SHE SEEMED SO TOGETHER. THEN WE GAVE EARTH NEW MAGIC. WIN!
EXCEPT IT'S DIFFERENT NOW. SHE'S LEARNING A WHOLE NEW OPERATING SYSTEM, WHILE EVERYONE EXPECTS HER TO BE "WILLOW THE GREAT AND POWERFUL."
I CAN'T STOP 'EM!
MY BEST FRIEND'S EXHAUSTED. OVERWHELMED. USED TO BE GILES WOULD HELP WITH SOMETHING LIKE THIS, BUT OH YEAH-- I GOT OUR FATHER FIGURE KILLED.

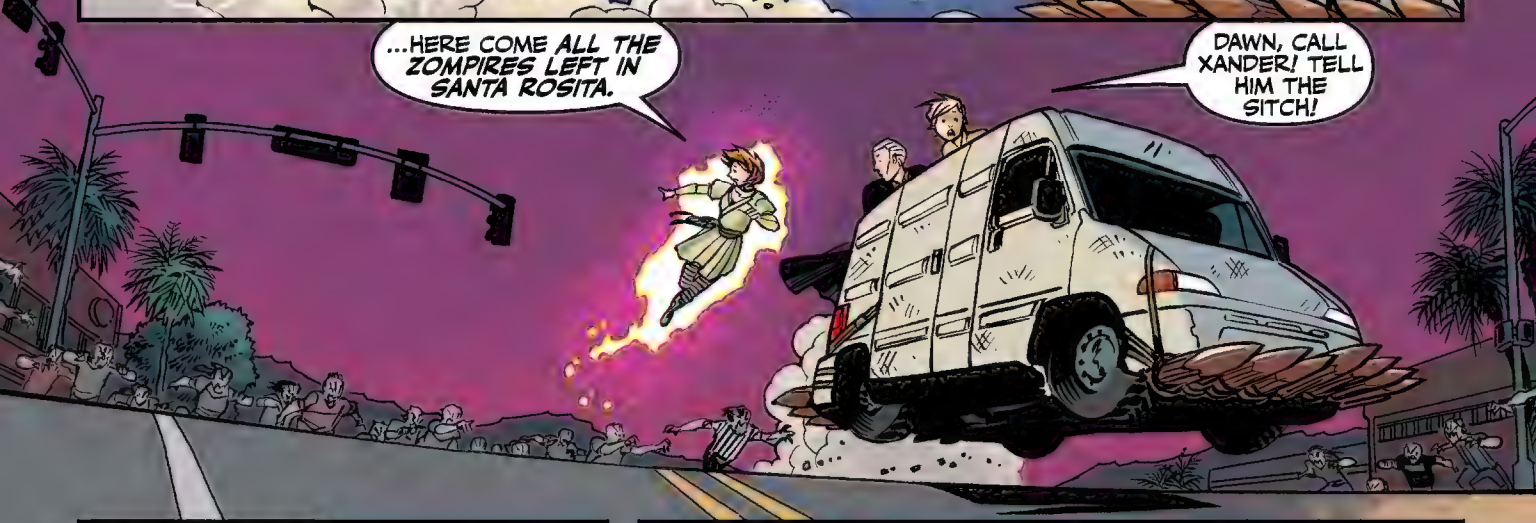
NO FEAR, LUV. I RODE THE NEW YORK SUBWAY IN THE SEVENTIES. FAR WORSE.
AT LEAST SPIKE'S IN A GOOD PLACE. A GREAT PLACE, REALLY. FOR BOTH OF US.
WE CAN BE AROUND EACH OTHER WITHOUT ALL THE HISTORY GETTING IN THE WAY.


IT'S OKAY. I LEARNED TO DRIVE UNDER CONDITIONS JUST LIKE THIS.
THAT ENGLISH GUY...H-HE'S A VAMPIRE?
SPIKE? HE'S ONE OF US. HE HAS A SOUL.

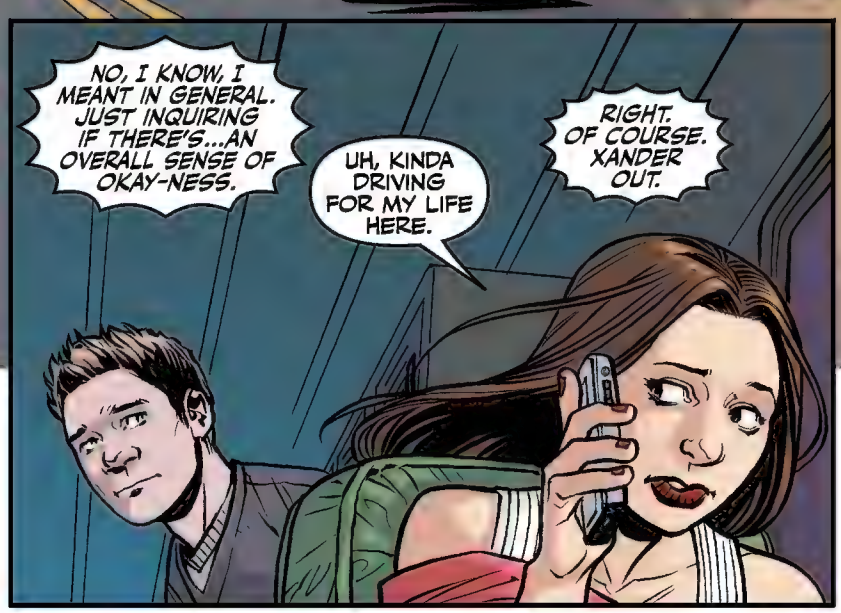
HE WENT THROUGH UNIMAGINABLE AGONY TO REGAIN IT. FOR LOVE. UNREQUITED LOVE FOR THE WOMAN FATED TO KILL ALL HIS KIND.
AND NOW OUR TORTURED ANTIHERO FIGHTS FOR THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE, HIS ROGUISH CHARM AND ROUGH EXTERIOR MASKING A BROKEN HEART OF NOBILITY AND GOOD...
=SIGH=

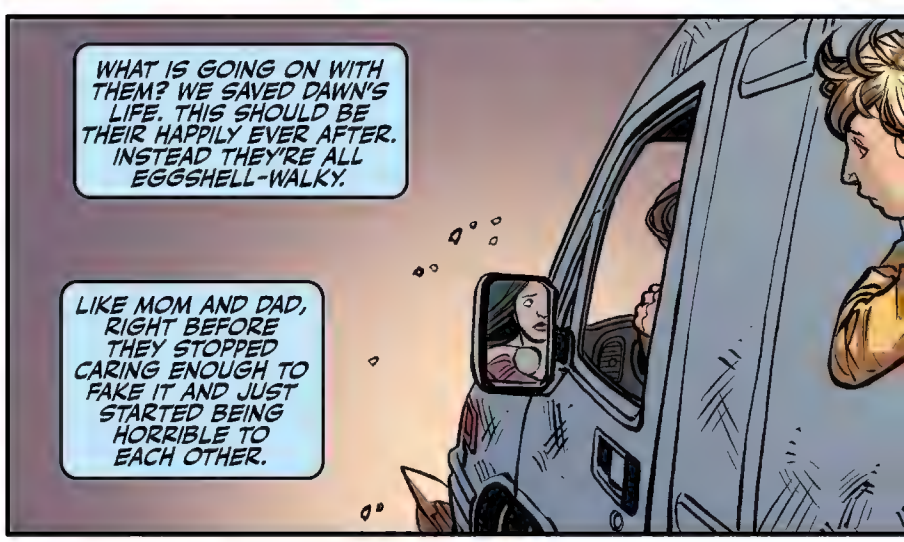
THEY'RE SLOWIN' US DOWN! WE NEED TO SHED BAGGAGE!
YEAH. THIS IS HOW IT HAD TO BE FOR US, AFTER EVERYTHING.
THE SUPER-HOT BUT OH-SO-WRONG AFFAIR. THE AWFUL PLACE I WAS IN WHEN IT HAPPENED. ALL THE WAYS WE HURT EACH OTHER.
NO U-TURN
AND JUST THE GIANT MOUNTAIN OF PROBLEMS THAT COMES WITH A SLAYER AND A VAMPIRE TOGETHER.
ESPECIALLY THIS SLAYER.
IT'S ALL GOOD NOW.
THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I WANTED.
ALL RIGHT?
COULDN'T BE BETTER.
YAY FOR MATURITY.

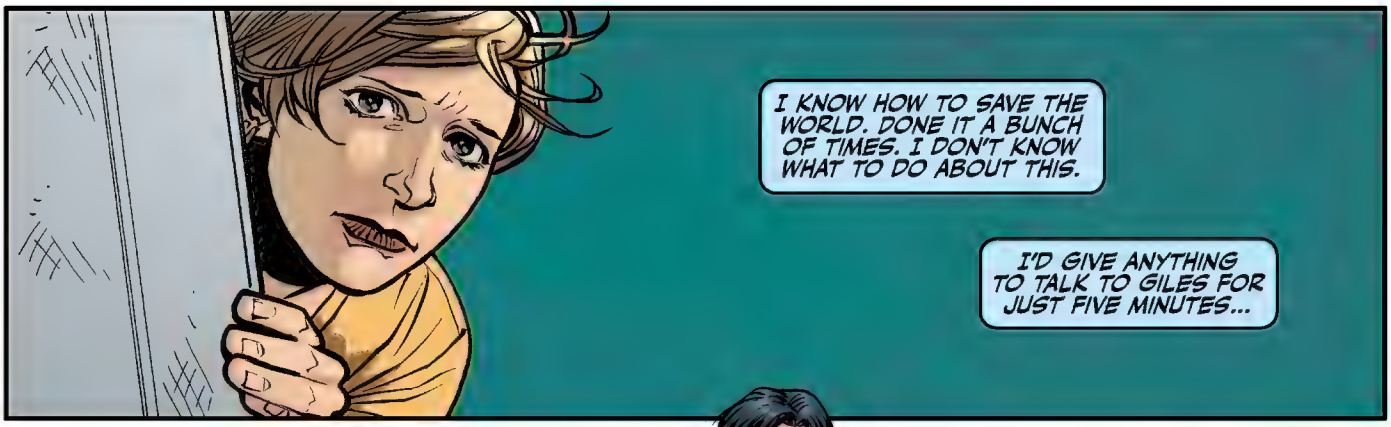
I'VE GOT GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS. THE GOOD NEWS IS, WE'VE DRAWN THEM OUT. THESE ARE ALL THE ZOMPIRES LEFT IN SANTA ROSITA.
THE BAD NEWS IS...


...HERE COME ALL THE ZOMPIRES LEFT IN SANTA ROSITA.
DAWN, CALL XANDER! TELL HIM THE SITCH!

WE'RE INBOUND, BUT WE'VE GOT MAJOR BOGEYS. ARE YOU READY?
AND RARIN', WHATEVER THAT IS. BRING IT ON IN TO XANDERVILLE. UM...ARE YOU OKAY?
FINE. NO FIGHTING FOR ME--I'M JUST THE WHEEL-WOMAN.

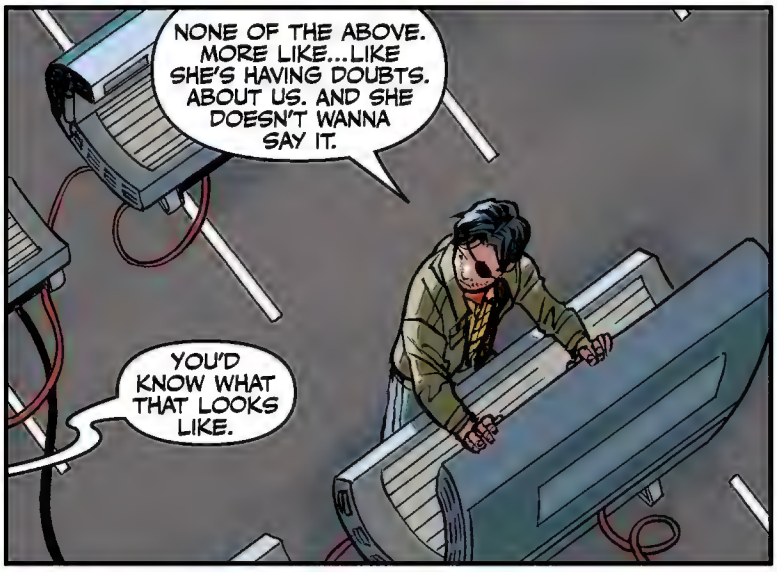

NO, I KNOW, I MEANT IN GENERAL. JUST INQUIRING IF THERE'S...AN OVERALL SENSE OF OKAY-NESS.
UH, KINDA DRIVING FOR MY LIFE HERE.
RIGHT. OF COURSE. XANDER OUT.


WHAT IS GOING ON WITH THEM? WE SAVED DAWN'S LIFE. THIS SHOULD BE THEIR HAPPILY EVER AFTER. INSTEAD THEY'RE ALL EGGSHELL-WALKY.
LIKE MOM AND DAD, RIGHT BEFORE THEY STOPPED CARING ENOUGH TO FAKE IT AND JUST STARTED BEING HORRIBLE TO EACH OTHER.

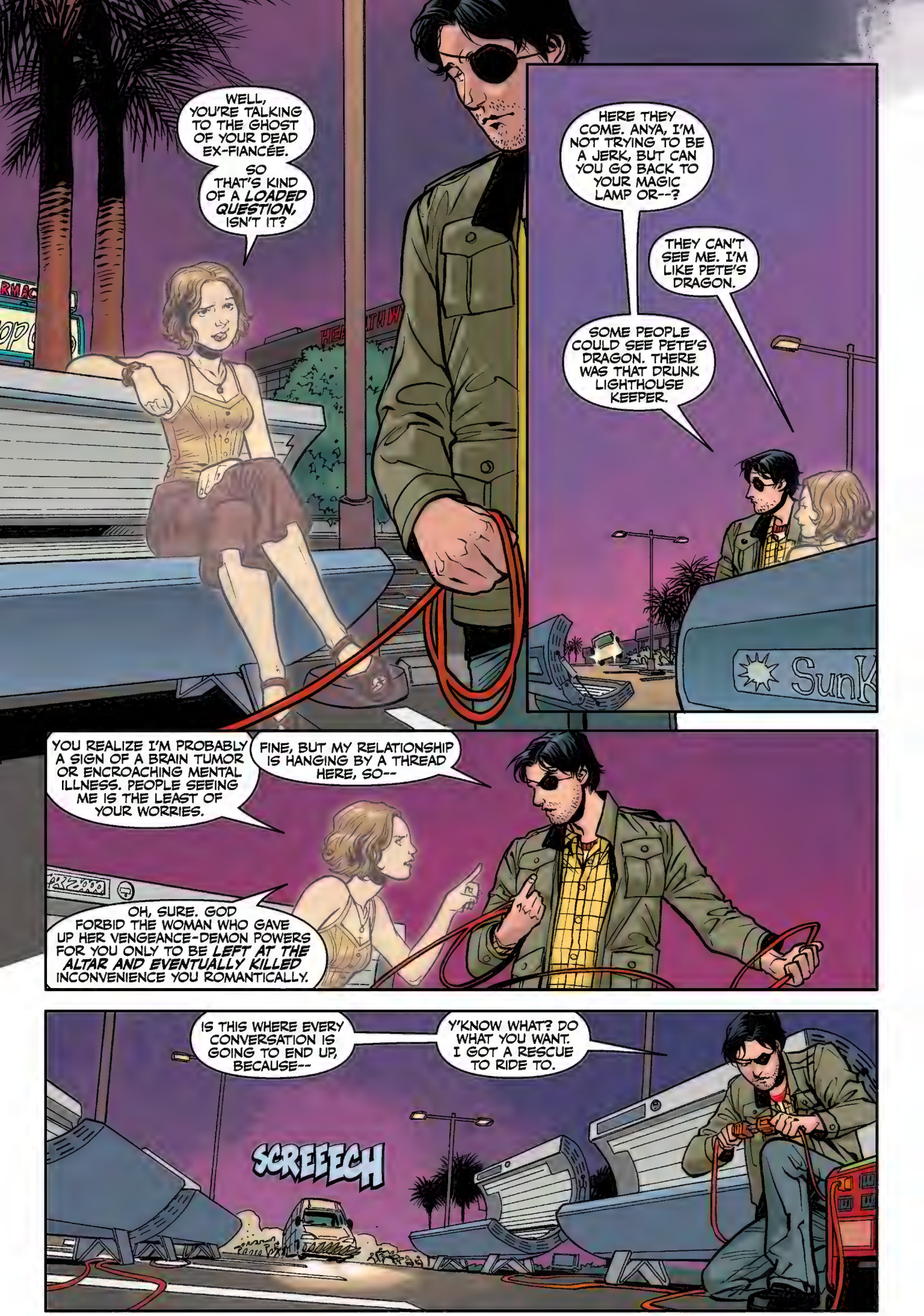

I KNOW HOW TO SAVE THE WORLD. DONE IT A BUNCH OF TIMES. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT THIS.
I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO TALK TO GILES FOR JUST FIVE MINUTES...

LIQUORS
TANNING
THAT WAS WEIRD. DAWN DEFINITELY SEEMS WEIRD. DOESN'T SHE?
"WEIRD" IS NOTHING NEW WITH THIS BUNCH. BUT YES.

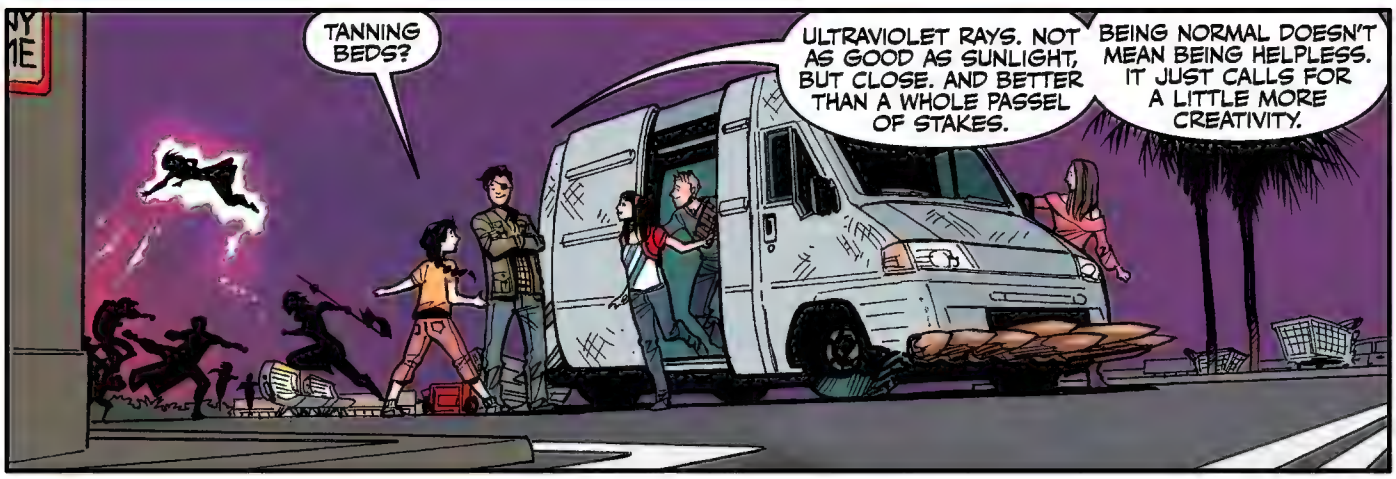
IT BOTHERS HER. THAT I BETRAYED BUFFY TO SAVE HER LIFE.
THEY BOTH SAY THEY FORGIVE ME, BUT SHE'S BEEN ACTING FUNNY EVER SINCE.
"FUNNY" AS IN MAD AT YOU? AFRAID OF YOU?


NONE OF THE ABOVE. MORE LIKE...LIKE SHE'S HAVING DOUBTS. ABOUT US. AND SHE DOESN'T WANNA SAY IT.
YOU'D KNOW WHAT THAT LOOKS LIKE.

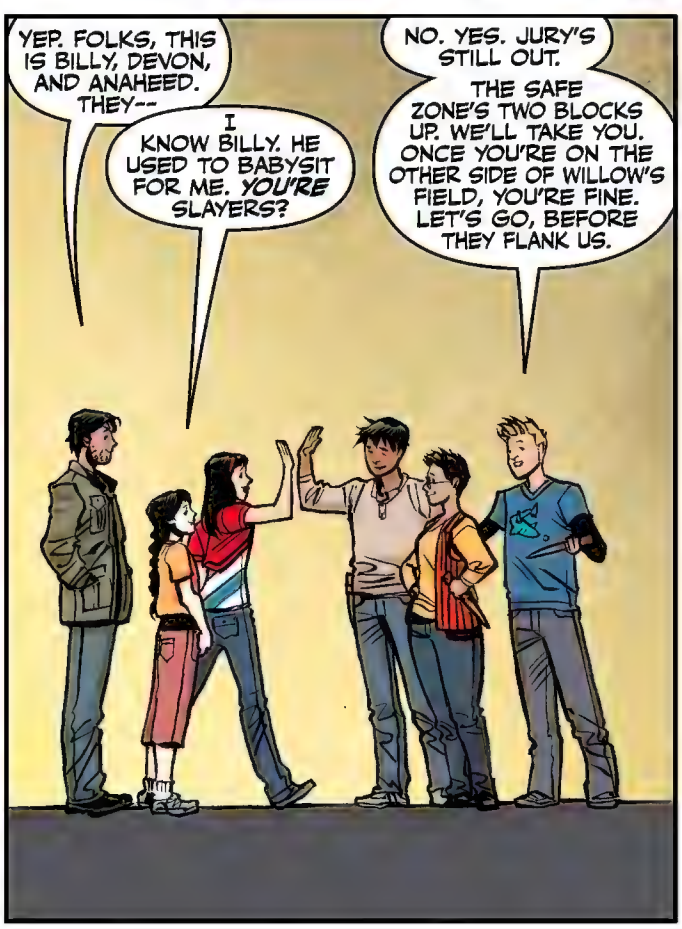
SO I'M NOT MAKING THIS UP, RIGHT? I'M NOT JUST BEING CRAZY?


WELL, YOU'RE TALKING TO THE GHOST OF YOUR DEAD EX-FIANCÉE.
SO THAT'S KIND OF A LOADED QUESTION, ISN'T IT?
HERE THEY COME. ANYA, I'M NOT TRYING TO BE A JERK, BUT CAN YOU GO BACK TO YOUR MAGIC LAMP OR--?
THEY CAN'T SEE ME. I'M LIKE PETE'S DRAGON.
SOME PEOPLE COULD SEE PETE'S DRAGON. THERE WAS THAT DRUNK LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER.
YOU REALIZE I'M PROBABLY A SIGN OF A BRAIN TUMOR OR ENCROACHING MENTAL ILLNESS. PEOPLE SEEING ME IS THE LEAST OF YOUR WORRIES.
FINE, BUT MY RELATIONSHIP IS HANGING BY A THREAD HERE, SO--
OH, SURE. GOD FORBID THE WOMAN WHO GAVE UP HER VENGEANCE-DEMON POWERS FOR YOU ONLY TO BE LEFT AT THE ALTAR AND EVENTUALLY KILLED INCONVENIENCE YOU ROMANTICALLY.
IS THIS WHERE EVERY CONVERSATION IS GOING TO END UP, BECAUSE--
Y'KNOW WHAT? DO WHAT YOU WANT. I GOT A RESCUE TO RIDE TO.
SCREEECH

FWAASH!
AND XANDER SAID, "LET THERE BE LIGHT!"
OI! GIVE A BLOKE A CHANCE!
PAFT
TANNING


TANNING BEDS?
ULTRAVIOLET RAYS. NOT AS GOOD AS SUNLIGHT, BUT CLOSE. AND BETTER THAN A WHOLE PASSEL OF STAKES.
BEING NORMAL DOESN'T MEAN BEING HELPLESS. IT JUST CALLS FOR A LITTLE MORE CREATIVITY.

PREACH IT, MY UNREMARKABLE BROTHER.
LAST GROUP'S EVACUATED. THIS THE NEW ONE?
EMERGENCY EXIT ONLY


YEP. FOLKS, THIS IS BILLY, DEVON, AND ANAHEED. THEY--
I KNOW BILLY. HE USED TO BABYSIT FOR ME. YOU'RE SLAYERS?
NO. YES. JURY'S STILL OUT.
THE SAFE ZONE'S TWO BLOCKS UP. WE'LL TAKE YOU. ONCE YOU'RE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF WILLOW'S FIELD, YOU'RE FINE. LET'S GO, BEFORE THEY FLANK US.

IF I WERE ANY GREENER WITH ENVY I'D BE GAMMA IRRADIATED.
BILLY JUST DECIDED TO LIVE THE LIFE HE WANTED--TO HELL WITH CONVENTION OR RULES. AND HE WAS ACCEPTED.
OH MY GOD, ANDREW, YOU COULD TOTALLY DO THE SAME THING. WHY WOULD YOU THINK FOR A SECOND YOU WOULDN'T BE ACCEPTED?
YOU REALLY THINK I COULD BE A SLAYER?
A...SLAYER. OF COURSE I DO. BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT.
AND ME TOO!
IF THIS IS ALL OF 'EM--AND IT DAMN WELL FEELS LIKE IT--WHERE'S LITTLE MISS UNDEAD HIPSTER?
PROBABLY HIDING...IT'S ALMOST DAWN. AND YOU SAID YOURSELF THEY'D DOUBLE-CROSS US. THEY'RE SOULLESS MONSTERS--WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?
OR MAYBE WE HAD TO FIGHT OUR WAY THROUGH 'EM TO GET TO YOU!
YOU WANNA KEEP TROLLING ME, OR WOULD YOU RATHER WIPE THESE STAINS OFF THE PLANET?
YOU REALLY DO HATE 'EM, HUH?
LEAVE 'EM ALONE, THEY'LL RUN RAMPANT--EITHER USE UP THE NATURAL RESOURCES, OR GET US ALL KILLED. THEY'RE EVEN WORSE THAN YOUR KIND...AT LEAST YOU'RE TASTY.
SO NICE TO KNOW YOUR MOTIVES ARE PURE.

FORTY MINUTES LATER.
TOOK LONGER'N I'D LIKE, BUT I THINK WE GOT THIS WON.
FIGHTING HORDES OF FERAL VAMPIRES AND NOT BURSTING INTO FLAME AT THE END IS RATHER A NICE SWITCH FOR ME.
YOU'RE AN INCORRIGIBLE FATE-TEMPTER, AREN'T YOU?
OR DID YOU FORGET WHAT HAPPENS EVERY MORNING ABOUT NOW?
AH, RIGHT. TIME FOR ALL THOSE OF THE UNDEAD PERSUASION TO BE SNUG IN THEIR COFFINS.
OR, IN MY CASE, THAT LIQUOR STORE.
TERRIBLY SORRY I CAN'T HELP WITH THE TIDYING UP. ANYONE NEEDS ME, I'LL BE RIGHTEOUSLY DRUNK.
LIQUORS
YEAH, SO, MAYBE WE STRETCHED OUT THE FIGHT A LITTLE. 'CAUSE I KNEW WHERE THIS WAS GOING.
YOU TURN ON US, WE HAVE TO KILL YOU, I FEEL BAD ABOUT IT EVEN THOUGH I REALLY SHOULDN'T BECAUSE YOU'RE EVIL UNDEAD MONSTERS. AND I'M JUST NOT IN THE MOOD, Y'KNOW?
SO THANKS. SERIOUSLY. NOW HEAD ON BACK TO THE OLD CRYPT. OR CRUMBLE TO DUST IN THE SUN, NO SKIN OFF MY--

UM.
CONFUSED.
SOMEONE GET A PICTURE. THAT LOOK ON HER FACE. I WANT TO KEEP IT FOREVER.
NEVER MIND. I'LL JUST KEEP THE FACE.
MAKE A *PILLOW* OUT OF IT.
OVERCONFIDENT MUCH?
SO YOU'VE GOT SPECIAL SUNSCREEN. BIG WHOOP.
I'VE BEEN DUSTING YOU CREEPS LONGER THAN I'VE BEEN *DRIVING*.
MEGA
ABC
SHNK
THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW.

NOT THAT DIFFERENT, APPARENTLY.
PAFT
CHOK
DIFFERENT ENOUGH.
LIQUORS
WHAT THE FRIAR TUCK?
HANG ON, SLAYER, I'M--
GAH!
SSSS
6:00 AM - 2:00 AM
7 DAYS A WEEK

STAY IN THE SHADOWS, SPIKE! *YOU'RE* STILL VULNERABLE TO SUNLIGHT. THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT THESE GUYS!
WATCH OUT--WE'VE GOT AN EINSTEIN HERE!
DAWN, ANDREW, XANDER--GET INSIDE WITH SPIKE! HE'LL PROTECT YOU!
HEY, THE DAY I CAN'T HANDLE A VAMPIRE--
NO, SHE'S RIGHT. THERE'S BEEN A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE MYTHOS.
GET IN HERE. SO I DON'T FEEL COMPLETELY BLOODY USELESS, IF NOTHING ELSE.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THEY'RE TURNING TO MIST, BATS, NIGHT PANTHERS... WE'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE. WHEN THOSE JAPANESE VAMPIRES STOLE *DRACULA'S* POWERS.
IT'S NOT THAT. DRACULA TAUGHT ME HOW TO *UNDO* THAT SPELL. THIS IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT. SOMETHING *NEW.*
I CAN FEEL IT. THEY'RE... *INHERENTLY* STRONGER.
...AND TOO MANY TO HOLD BACK...
RUN! *GET OUT OF HERE!*

SCREW THAT. I'VE GOT A ONE-TIME LIMIT ON MY SISTER GETTING KILLED FOR ME.
TOO RIGHT. GRAB SOME BOTTLES. HIGHEST PROOF STUFF THEY GOT. WELLS, TEAR YOUR SHIRT INTO STRIPS.
ME? I HAVE BODY IMAGE ISSUES.
DEAL WITH 'EM.
OH, MY.
SHRRIP
SOON AS YOU GET A CLEAR SHOT...MAKE IT COUNT.
HARRIS. THIS GOES BAD, GET THE LITTLE BIT OUT OF HERE.
THAT'S WHAT I WAS GONNA SAY TO YOU.
I'M RIGHT HERE. AND I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
THEN FIGHT LIKE HELL.

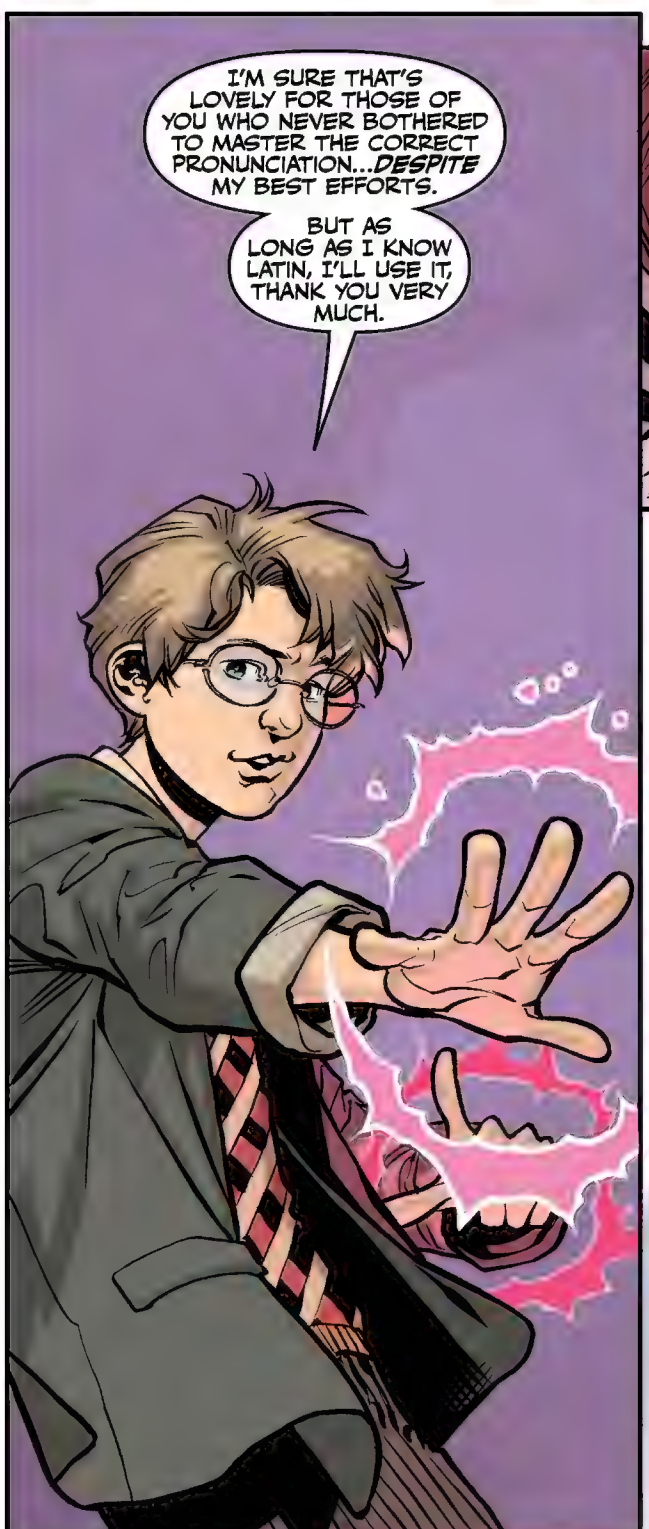
SO STUPID. ARROGANT AND STUPID. I PUT US IN A HOT ZONE AND ASSUMED I COULD GET US OUT. LIKE ALWAYS. NOW EVERYONE'S GONNA PAY FOR MY MISTAKE.
WE GOT BACK TOGETHER JUST TO DIE TOGETHER.
WE'VE BEEN SLOWLY FALLING APART EVER SINCE GILES FIRST LEFT FOR ENGLAND.
I THOUGHT I COULD HOLD US TOGETHER. I CAN'T EVEN KEEP US ALIVE.
PLEASE. IF THERE'S ANYTHING COSMIC OUT THERE THAT DOESN'T WANT TO KILL US...I HAVEN'T ASKED FOR MUCH. AND I'VE LOST A LOT.
NO!
DON'T LET ANY MORE PEOPLE I LOVE DIE BECAUSE OF ME.

WILLOW! GET EVERYONE OUT OF HERE!
THEY CAN TURN INTO BATS! AND FLY!
I'LL COVER YOU!

NO! I'M NOT LEAVING YOU! WE CAN WIN THIS IF WE STICK TOGETHER!
DAWNIE--WE ARE TOGETHER--AND IT'S NOT ENOUGH.
THERE'S NO ONE LEFT TO SAVE US.

AIN'T THAT JUST TYPICAL.
WHSTHKK
IF IT'S NOT IN THE STATES, IT DOESN'T EXIST TO YOU PEOPLE. BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS A LITTLE.
FAITH? HOW'D YOU--YOU'RE IN LONDON!
'BOUT A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, A COUPLE DUDES INVENTED A MACHINE THAT FLIES.
KENNEDY'S GOT ONE THAT GOES WICKED FAST.
LEAH, COVER ME! HOLLY, TOSS SOME INCENDIARY GRENADES AT THEIR FLANK.
KENNEDY! THIS IS GREAT! AND ALSO AWKWARD.
APRICATIO!
WAIT--WHO'S CASTING SPELLS?

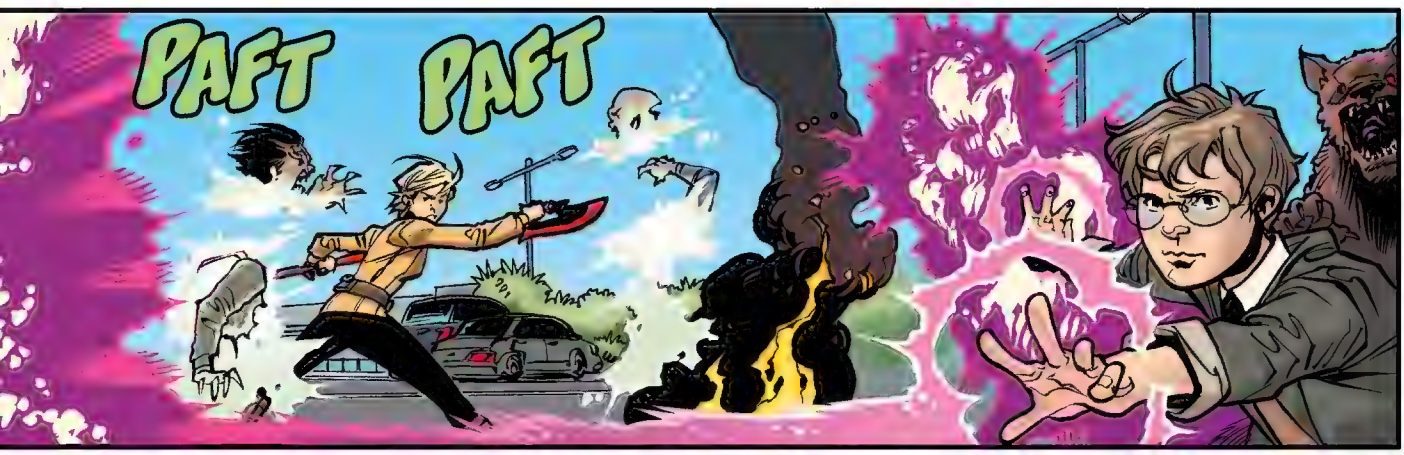
WHAT THE *WHAT?* FAITH-- I DON'T CARE IF HE KNOWS MAGIC, YOU CAN'T BRING A *KID* HERE!
AND TELL HIM YOU DON'T NEED TO CAST SPELLS IN DEAD LANGUAGES ANYMORE.


I'M SURE THAT'S LOVELY FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO NEVER BOTHERED TO MASTER THE CORRECT PRONUNCIATION...*DESPITE* MY BEST EFFORTS.
BUT AS LONG AS I KNOW LATIN, I'LL USE IT, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

OH MY GOD.
GILES?

GILES?

HELLO.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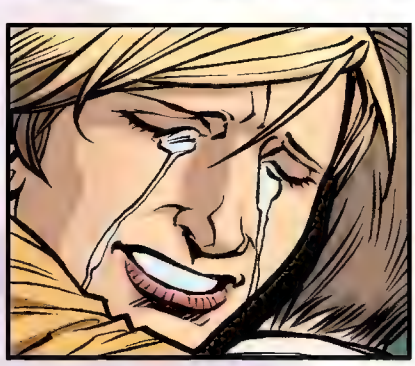
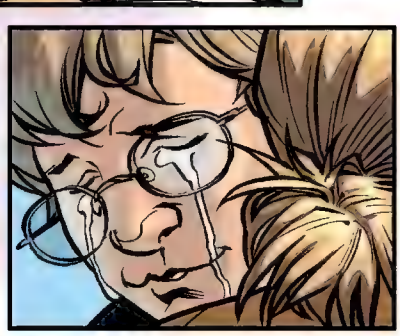
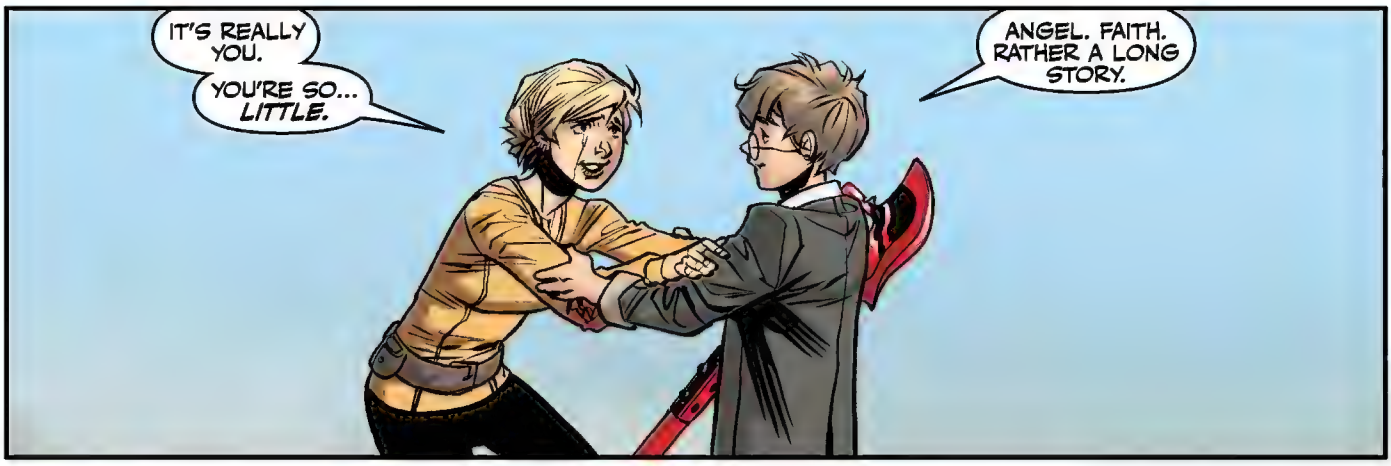





IT'S REALLY YOU.
YOU'RE SO... LITTLE.
ANGEL. FAITH. RATHER A LONG STORY.

AND IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, WE GOT OTHER PROBLEMS!

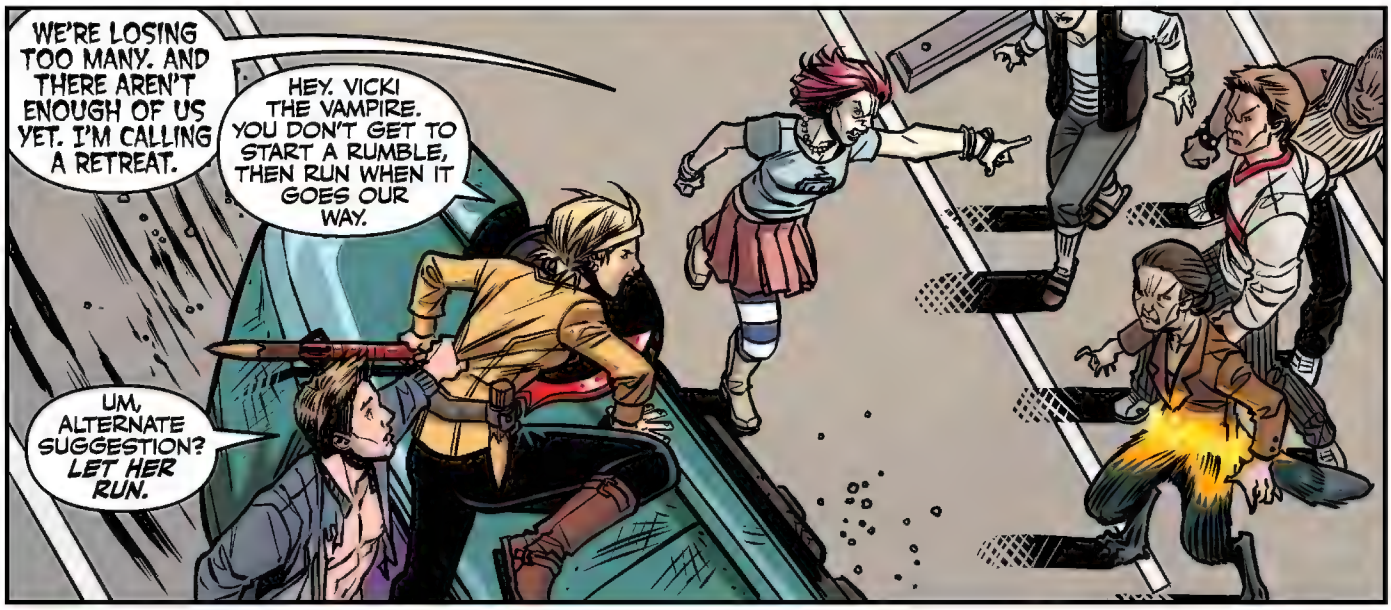
YEAH.

SUCKS TO BE THEM.

NEW RULES
PART TWO
SO YOU VAMPIRES ARE NEW AND IMPROVED, HUH? CONGRATS.
SEE HOW MUCH GOOD THAT DOES YOU...
...WHEN WE GET OLD SCHOOL!
LIQUORS

THEY'RE STILL VULNERABLE TO *STAKES AND FIRE!* THEIR BODIES JUST SEEM A BIT *STURDIER.* EXTRA EFFORT IS CALLED FOR.
YEAH--ZITS AND SQUEAKY VOICE ASIDE, THAT'S SOME VINTAGE *GILES* EXPOSITION.
SILVER BULLETS WORK. OR MAYBE IT'S THE DECAPITATION.
YOU'RE GOOD AT THIS.
RICH, TOO.
SORRY. THAT WAS PETTY. GLAD YOU GOT YOUR MAGIC BACK.
I'M GLAD YOU'RE DOING SO WELL, KENNEDY.
LOOK AT US, ALL MATURE.
NOW CAN WE GET BACK TO SLAYING? BECAUSE THIS IS FREAKING ME OUT.
GODDESS, YES.

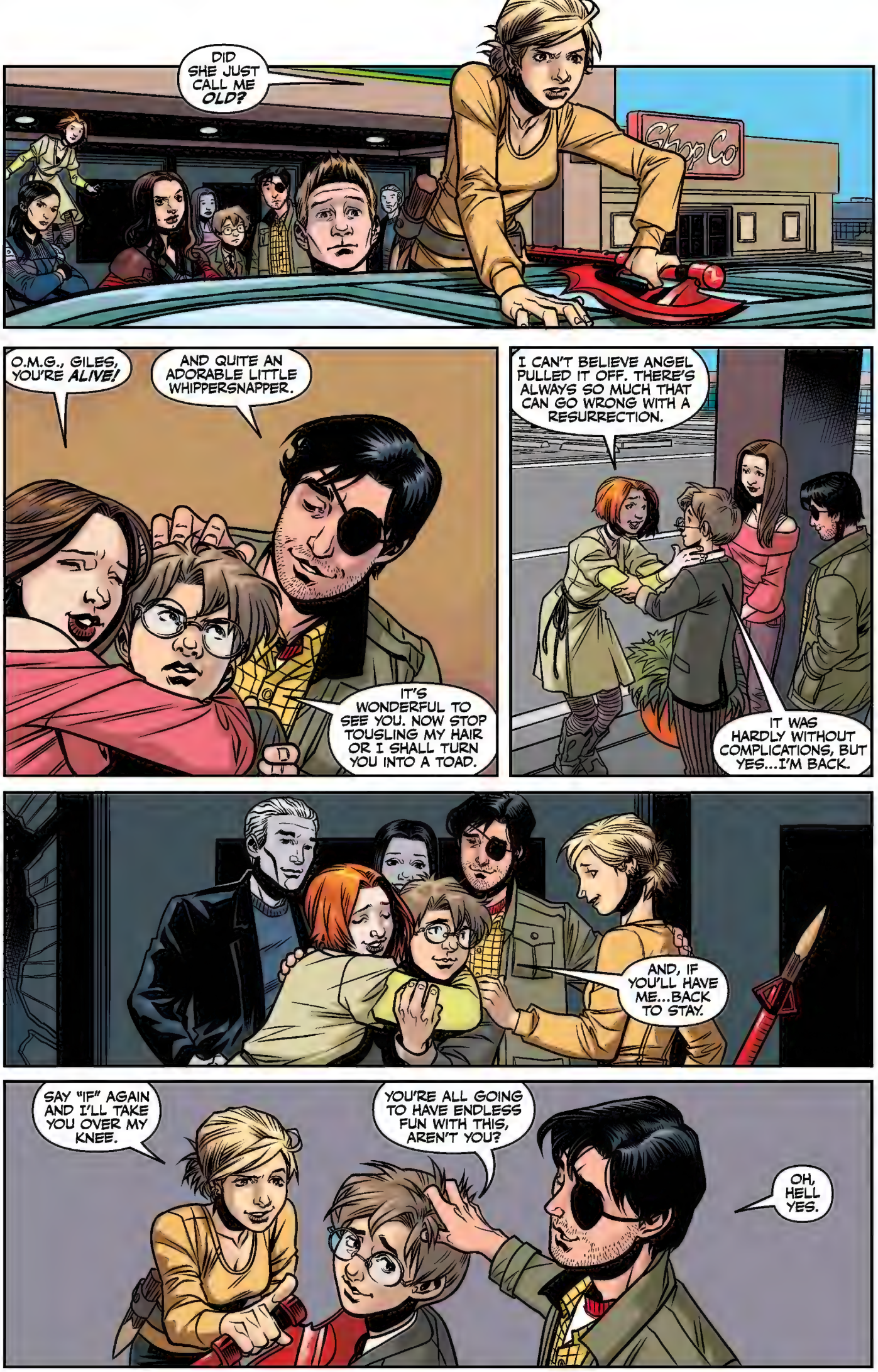
AAH! SINCE WHEN CAN VAMPIRES TURN INTO BEES?
LET 'EM COME.
SPIKE, I KNOW IT LOOKS BAD, BUT THIS IS NO TIME TO CRAWL INTO A BOTTLE--
FWOOOSH
RETRACTED.
ENOUGH!
SCREEEEE
SHE'S STRONG. CAN YOU DO THAT?
I FIND SUCH NAKED PLEAS FOR ATTENTION VULGAR.
SO, NO.

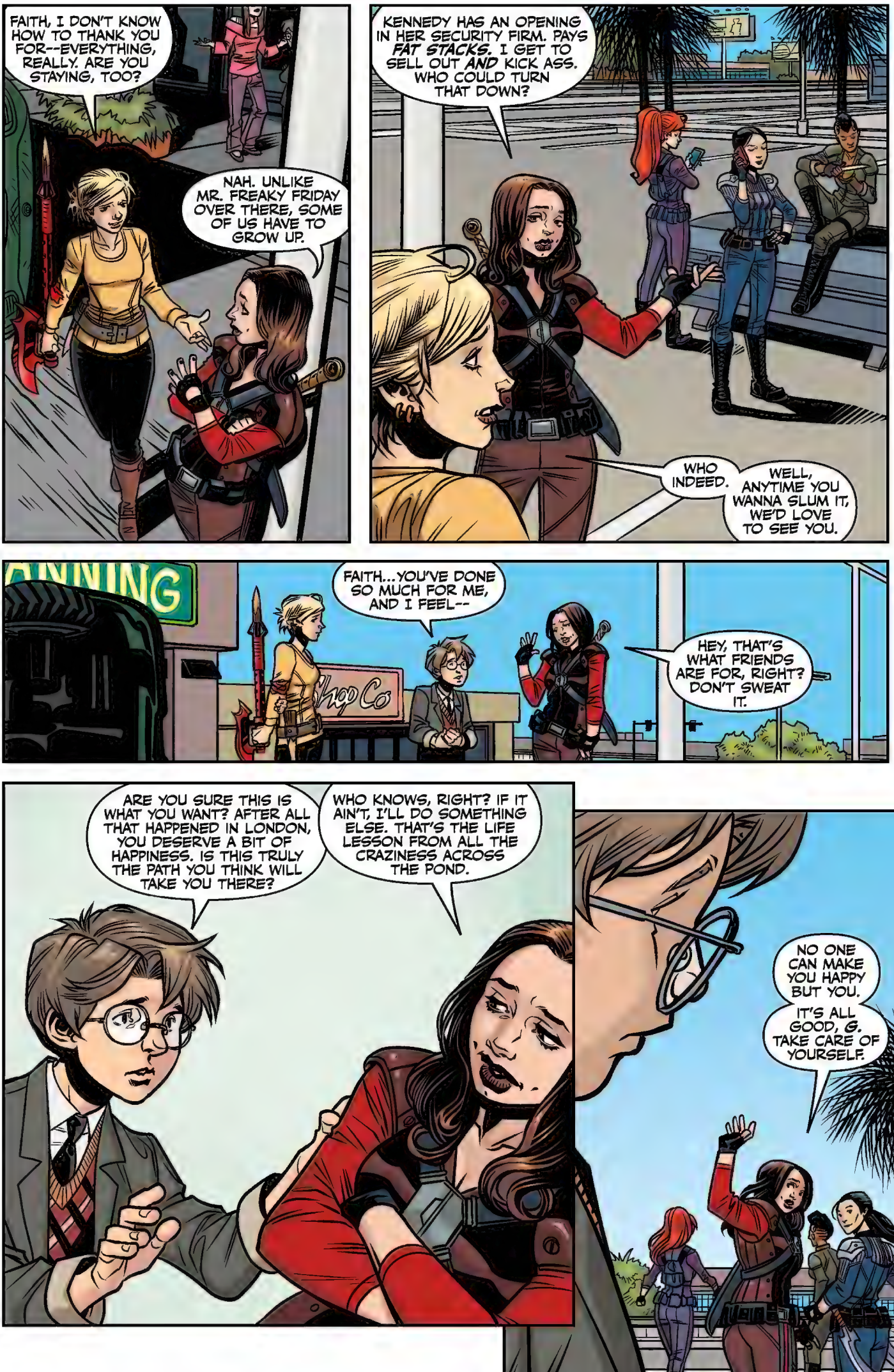

WE'RE LOSING TOO MANY. AND THERE AREN'T ENOUGH OF US YET. I'M CALLING A RETREAT.
HEY. VICKI THE VAMPIRE. YOU DON'T GET TO START A RUMBLE, THEN RUN WHEN IT GOES OUR WAY.
UM, ALTERNATE SUGGESTION? *LET HER RUN.*

NEWS FLASH. IT'S NEVER GOING YOUR WAY AGAIN.
YOU'RE THE PAST. WE'RE THE FUTURE.

LUCKY FOR YOU, WE'RE STILL FIGURING OUT EXACTLY WHAT THAT MEANS. YOU AND YOUR *NOSTALGIA* ACT HAD YOUR CHANCE. I THINK WE KNOW HOW THAT WENT.

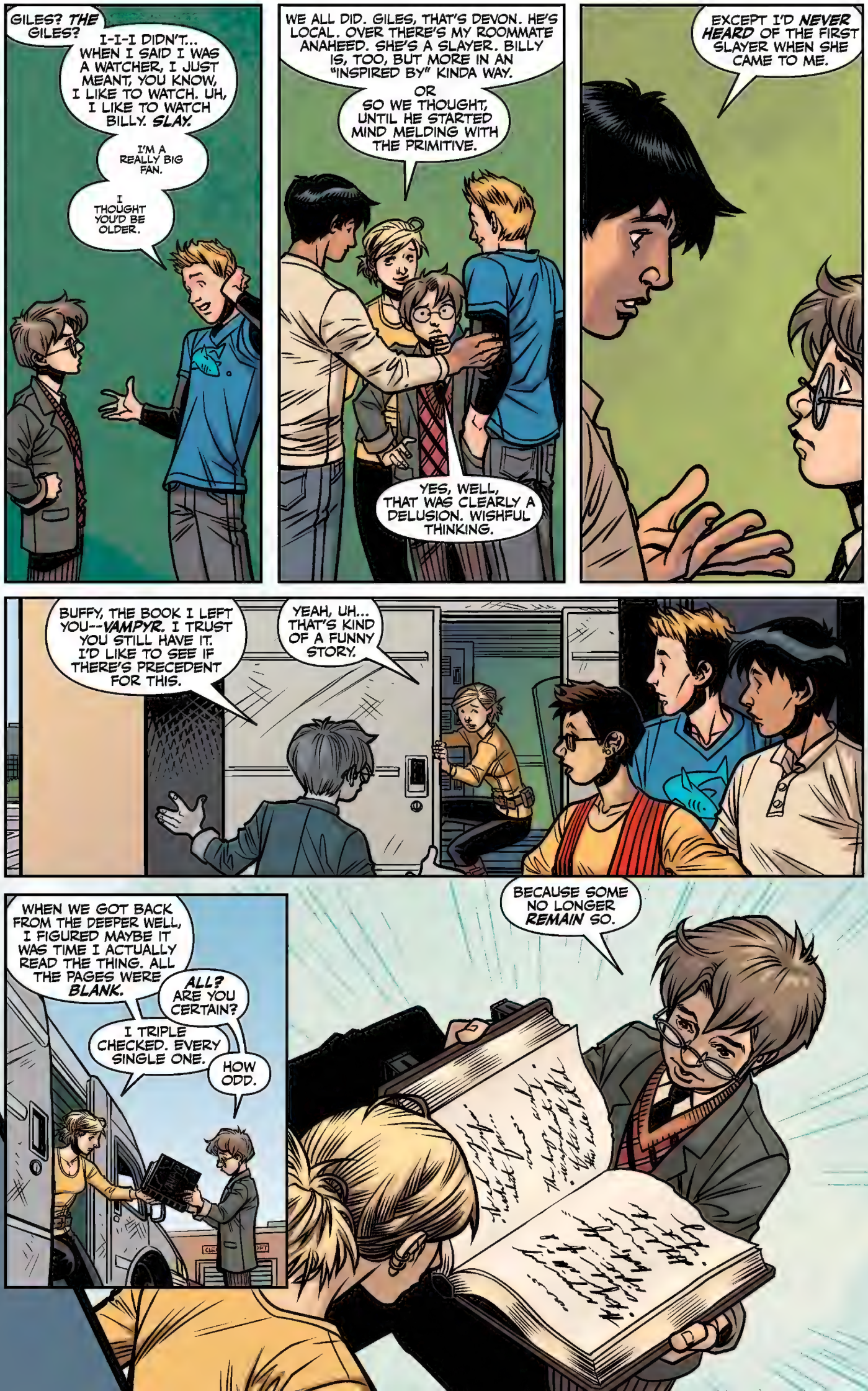
WHAT LITTLE I REMEMBER OF BIOLOGY CLASS, YOU EITHER ADAPT OR DIE.
AND I ONLY SEE *ONE* OF US CHANGING.

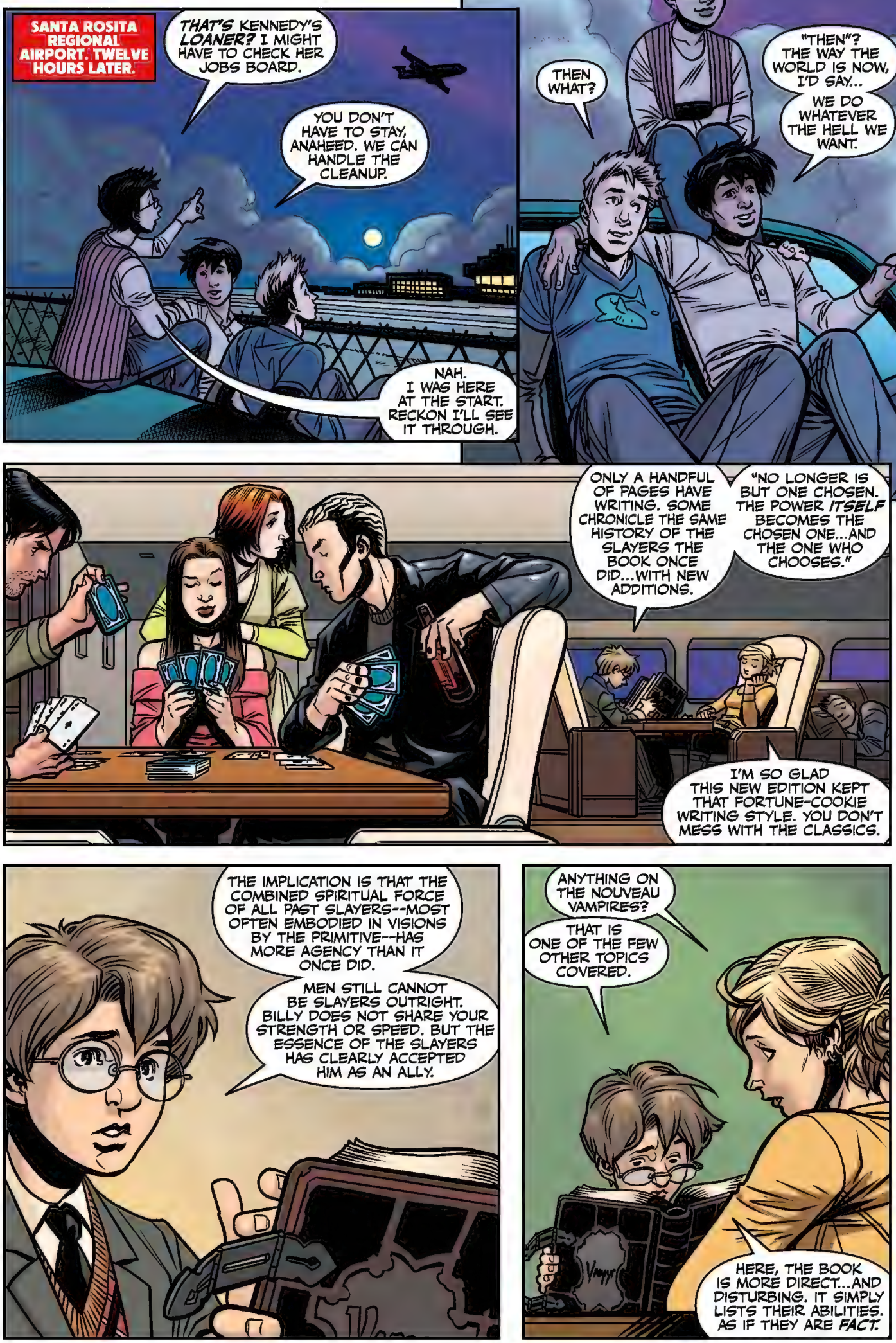

DID SHE JUST CALL ME OLD?
O.M.G., GILES, YOU'RE ALIVE!
AND QUITE AN ADORABLE LITTLE WHIPPERSNAPPER.
IT'S WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU. NOW STOP TOUSLING MY HAIR OR I SHALL TURN YOU INTO A TOAD.
I CAN'T BELIEVE ANGEL PULLED IT OFF. THERE'S ALWAYS SO MUCH THAT CAN GO WRONG WITH A RESURRECTION.
IT WAS HARDLY WITHOUT COMPLICATIONS, BUT YES...I'M BACK.
AND, IF YOU'LL HAVE ME...BACK TO STAY.
SAY "IF" AGAIN AND I'LL TAKE YOU OVER MY KNEE.
YOU'RE ALL GOING TO HAVE ENDLESS FUN WITH THIS, AREN'T YOU?
OH, HELL YES.

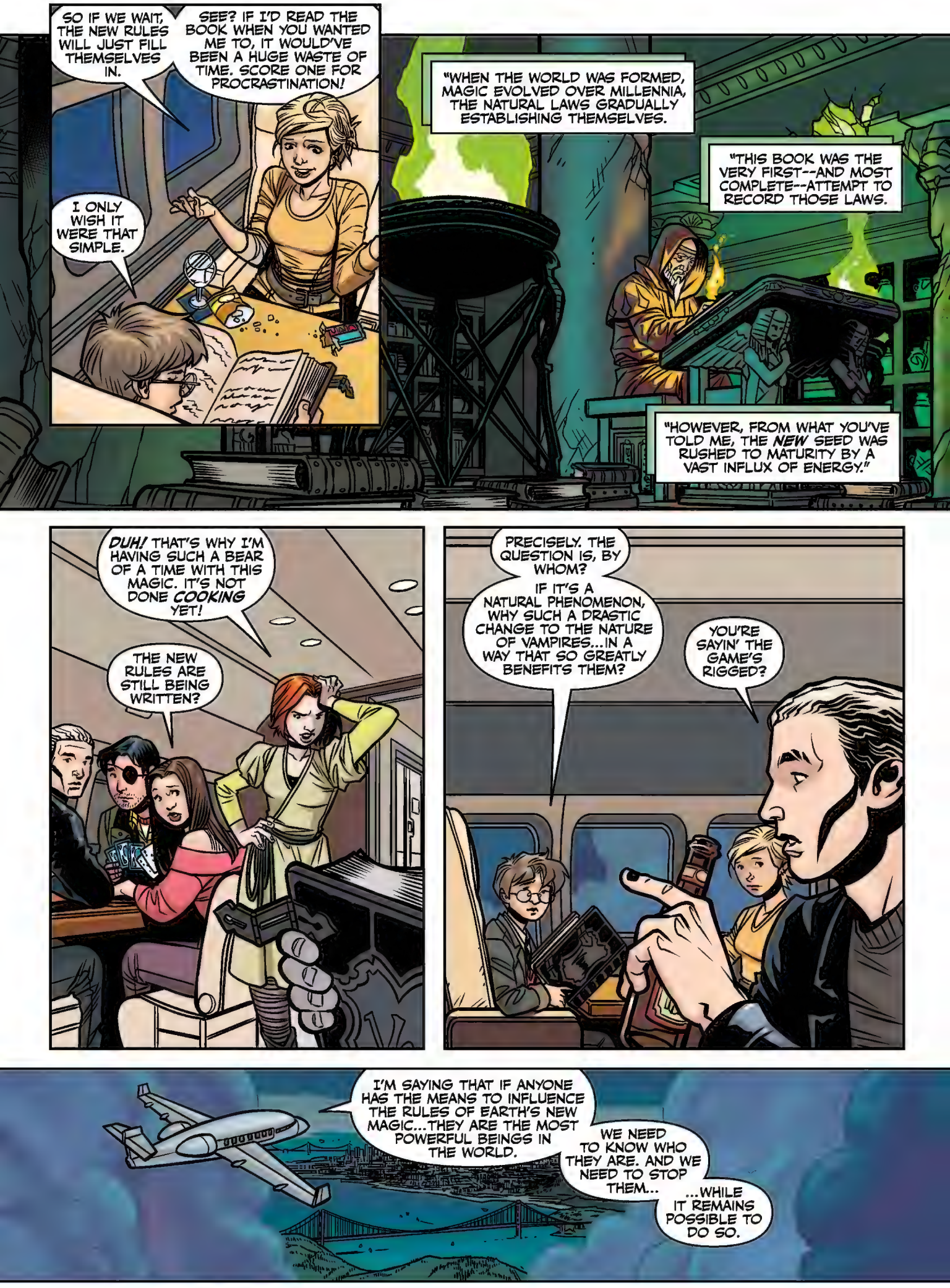

FAITH, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU FOR--EVERYTHING, REALLY. ARE YOU STAYING, TOO?
NAH. UNLIKE MR. FREAKY FRIDAY OVER THERE, SOME OF US HAVE TO GROW UP.
KENNEDY HAS AN OPENING IN HER SECURITY FIRM. PAYS *FAT STACKS.* I GET TO SELL OUT *AND* KICK ASS. WHO COULD TURN THAT DOWN?
WHO INDEED.
WELL, ANYTIME YOU WANNA SLUM IT, WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU.
FAITH...YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH FOR ME, AND I FEEL--
HEY, THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR, RIGHT? DON'T SWEAT IT.
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT? AFTER ALL THAT HAPPENED IN LONDON, YOU DESERVE A BIT OF HAPPINESS. IS THIS TRULY THE PATH YOU THINK WILL TAKE YOU THERE?
WHO KNOWS, RIGHT? IF IT AIN'T, I'LL DO SOMETHING ELSE. THAT'S THE LIFE LESSON FROM ALL THE CRAZINESS ACROSS THE POND.
NO ONE CAN MAKE YOU HAPPY BUT YOU.
IT'S ALL GOOD, G. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.

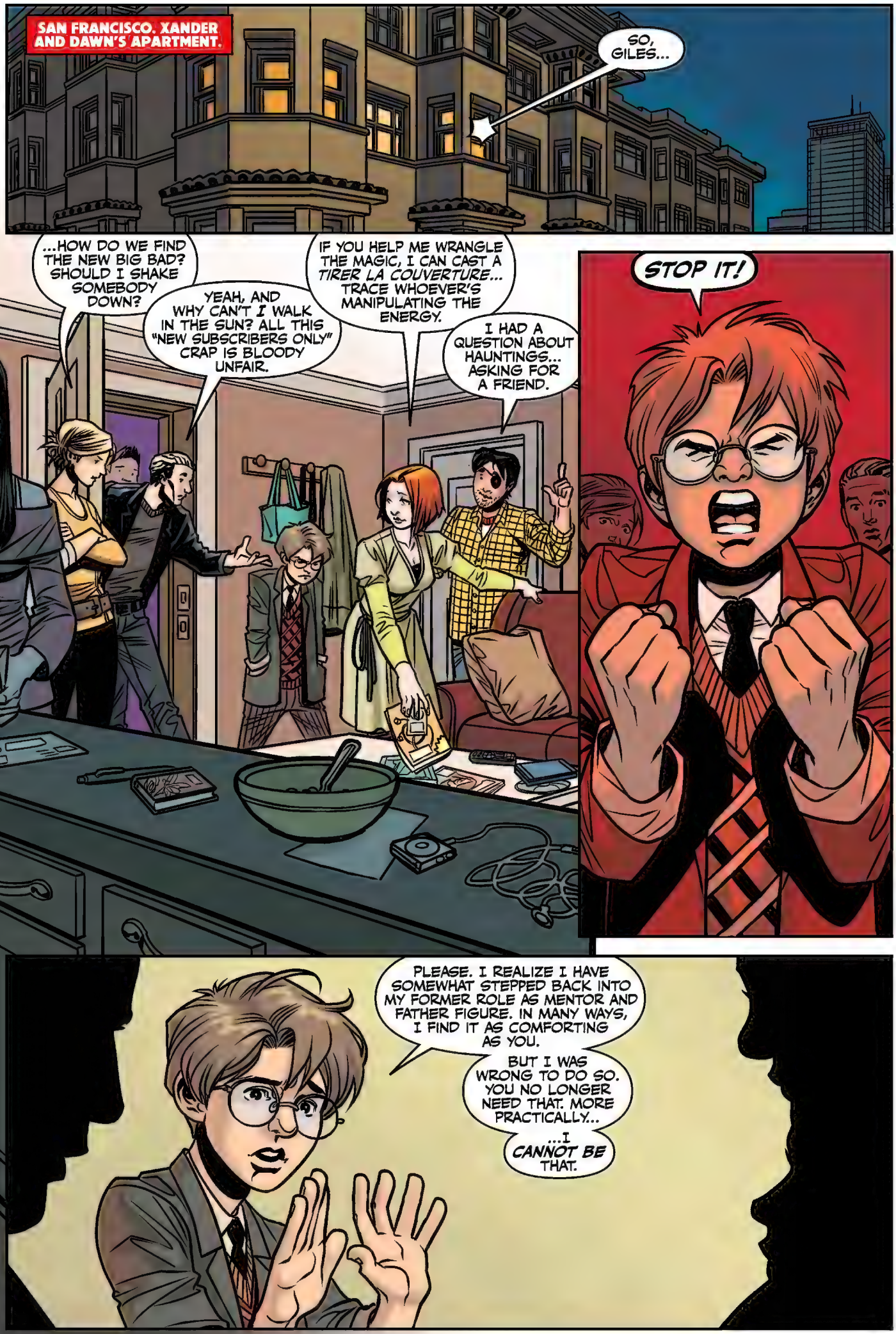
OI, KOH! COULD'VE USED YOU IN THE SCRAP. WHERE YOU BEEN?
FIGHTING UNDEAD. THEY CHANGED SHAPE, LIKE WERE-BEASTS. IN MY DAY, THEY DID NOT HAVE SUCH POWER.
BUT IT APPEARS YOU SLEW YOUR FOES WITHOUT MY HELP.
UH...YOU DON'T SEE ANY, DO YOU?
NO. I SEE THAT THE BATTLE HAS ENDED, AND THE WARRIORS ARE DEPARTING. SO I, TOO, WILL TAKE MY LEAVE.
A NITOBE DEMON? FASCINATING. I'VE NEVER MET ONE IN PERSON. THEIR CODE OF HONOR IS AMONG THE MOST ELABORATE AND STRICT OF ANY SENTIENT BEING.
HIS NAME'S ELDRE KOH. WE'VE BUTTED HEADS A TIME OR TWO, BUT IF NOT FOR HIM, WE'D ALL HAVE DIED IN THE DEEPER WELL.
KOH, ANY DEBT YOU HAD TO ME WAS SQUARED A LONG TIME AGO. IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU...
THERE IS BUT ONE THING I WISH. THE NAME OF THE TRAITOR WHO HAD ME FALSELY IMPRISONED FOR THE MURDER OF MY FAMILY.
RIGHT. AND ILLYRIA HAD THAT, AND I GOT HER KILLED. UM... I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D ACCEPT A BROWNIE BASKET...?
"KILLED"?
YOU KNOW LITTLE OF THE OLD ONES.
FARE YOU WELL, SLAYER.

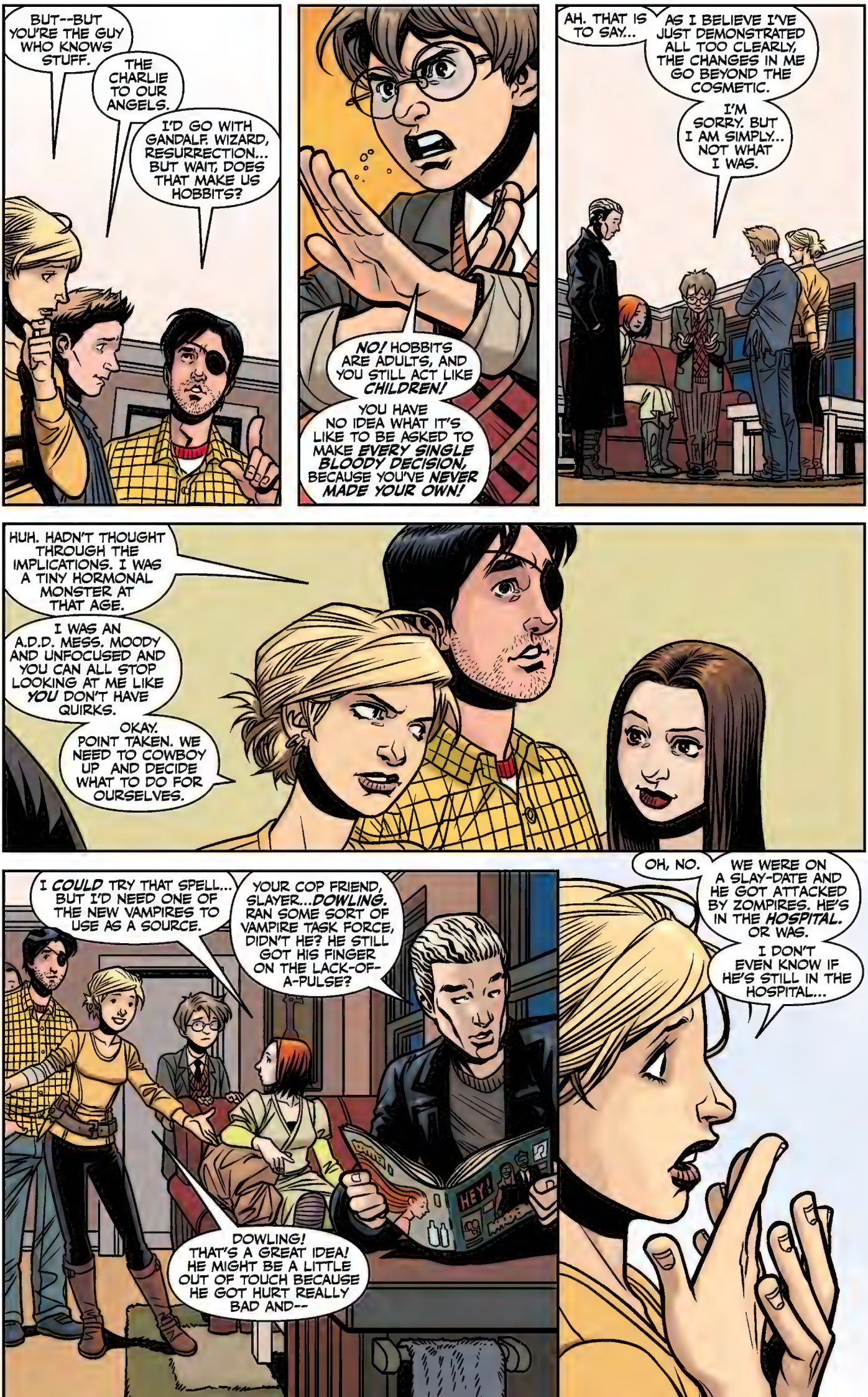
HEART WRENCHING. TEARFUL GOODBYES ALL AROUND.
NOW CAN WE PLEASE TALK ABOUT THE FACT THAT WE JUST SAW DOZENS OF VAMPIRES DO THINGS THEY'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO?
ARE WE SURE THIS ISN'T A REPEAT OF THOSE JAPANESE VAMPIRES STEALING DRACULA'S MOJO?
NOT THIS TIME. I DIDN'T SENSE ANY OUTSIDE MAGIC.
YEAH, AND BESIDES, EVEN DRACULA'S POWERS ARE WEAKENED IN DAYLIGHT. BUT THOSE VAMPS WERE MORPHING LIKE THE T-1000.
IS THAT WHAT THEY WERE? VAMPIRES?
A1 LIQUORS
WE SAW A BIG FLOCK OF... SOMETHING TAKE OFF.
OKAY, WAIT. SUDDEN INSPIRATION. EARTH HAS NEW MAGIC, RIGHT? MAYBE THAT MEANS NEW RULES.
THE NOSFERATI AREN'T THE ONLY ONES DOING STUFF THEY SHOULDN'T. BILLY HAD A SPIRIT VISION OF THE FIRST SLAYER...
...RIGHT AROUND THE TIME THEY KICK-STARTED THE NEW SEED.
THAT'S RIDICULOUS, ANDREW. ONLY SLAYERS MAY COMMUNE WITH THE PRIMITIVE, AND ONLY FEMALES CAN BE SLAYERS.
OH YEAH? WELL, I'M HIS WATCHER, AND I SAY BILLY BROKE THE MOLD. WHO ARE YOU, KID?
I AM RUPERT GILES, YOUNG MAN. THE LAST OF THE WATCHERS' COUNCIL.
AND YOU, SIR, ARE NO WATCHER.


GILES? THE GILES?
I-I-I DIDN'T... WHEN I SAID I WAS A WATCHER, I JUST MEANT, YOU KNOW, I LIKE TO WATCH. UH, I LIKE TO WATCH BILLY. SLAY.
I'M A REALLY BIG FAN.
I THOUGHT YOU'D BE OLDER.
WE ALL DID. GILES, THAT'S DEVON. HE'S LOCAL. OVER THERE'S MY ROOMMATE ANAHEED. SHE'S A SLAYER. BILLY IS, TOO, BUT MORE IN AN "INSPIRED BY" KINDA WAY.
OR SO WE THOUGHT, UNTIL HE STARTED MIND MELDING WITH THE PRIMITIVE.
YES, WELL, THAT WAS CLEARLY A DELUSION. WISHFUL THINKING.
EXCEPT I'D NEVER HEARD OF THE FIRST SLAYER WHEN SHE CAME TO ME.
BUFFY, THE BOOK I LEFT YOU--VAMPYR. I TRUST YOU STILL HAVE IT. I'D LIKE TO SEE IF THERE'S PRECEDENT FOR THIS.
YEAH, UH... THAT'S KIND OF A FUNNY STORY.
WHEN WE GOT BACK FROM THE DEEPER WELL, I FIGURED MAYBE IT WAS TIME I ACTUALLY READ THE THING. ALL THE PAGES WERE BLANK.
ALL? ARE YOU CERTAIN?
I TRIPLE CHECKED. EVERY SINGLE ONE.
HOW ODD.
BECAUSE SOME NO LONGER REMAIN SO.


SANTA ROSITA REGIONAL AIRPORT. TWELVE HOURS LATER.
THAT'S KENNEDY'S LOANER? I MIGHT HAVE TO CHECK HER JOBS BOARD.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO STAY, ANAHEED. WE CAN HANDLE THE CLEANUP.
NAH. I WAS HERE AT THE START. RECKON I'LL SEE IT THROUGH.
THEN WHAT?
"THEN"? THE WAY THE WORLD IS NOW, I'D SAY...
WE DO WHATEVER THE HELL WE WANT.
ONLY A HANDFUL OF PAGES HAVE WRITING. SOME CHRONICLE THE SAME HISTORY OF THE SLAYERS THE BOOK ONCE DID...WITH NEW ADDITIONS.
"NO LONGER IS BUT ONE CHOSEN. THE POWER ITSELF BECOMES THE CHOSEN ONE...AND THE ONE WHO CHOOSES."
I'M SO GLAD THIS NEW EDITION KEPT THAT FORTUNE-COOKIE WRITING STYLE. YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE CLASSICS.
THE IMPLICATION IS THAT THE COMBINED SPIRITUAL FORCE OF ALL PAST SLAYERS--MOST OFTEN EMBODIED IN VISIONS BY THE PRIMITIVE--HAS MORE AGENCY THAN IT ONCE DID.
MEN STILL CANNOT BE SLAYERS OUTRIGHT. BILLY DOES NOT SHARE YOUR STRENGTH OR SPEED. BUT THE ESSENCE OF THE SLAYERS HAS CLEARLY ACCEPTED HIM AS AN ALLY.
ANYTHING ON THE NOUVEAU VAMPIRES?
THAT IS ONE OF THE FEW OTHER TOPICS COVERED.
HERE, THE BOOK IS MORE DIRECT...AND DISTURBING. IT SIMPLY LISTS THEIR ABILITIES. AS IF THEY ARE FACT.

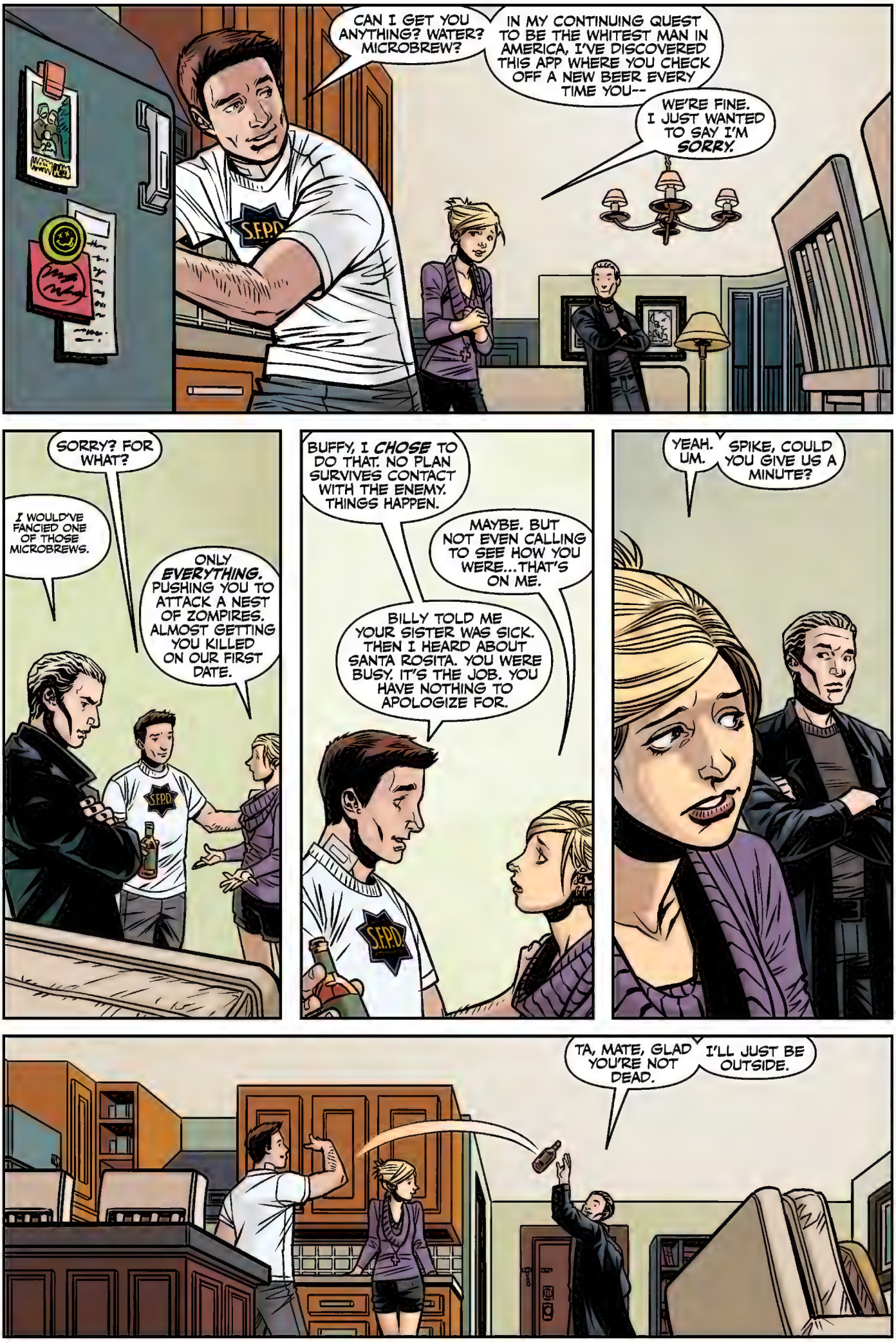

SO IF WE WAIT, THE NEW RULES WILL JUST FILL THEMSELVES IN.
SEE? IF I'D READ THE BOOK WHEN YOU WANTED ME TO, IT WOULD'VE BEEN A HUGE WASTE OF TIME. SCORE ONE FOR PROCRASTINATION!
I ONLY WISH IT WERE THAT SIMPLE.
"WHEN THE WORLD WAS FORMED, MAGIC EVOLVED OVER MILLENNIA, THE NATURAL LAWS GRADUALLY ESTABLISHING THEMSELVES.
"THIS BOOK WAS THE VERY FIRST--AND MOST COMPLETE--ATTEMPT TO RECORD THOSE LAWS.
"HOWEVER, FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME, THE *NEW* SEED WAS RUSHED TO MATURITY BY A VAST INFLUX OF ENERGY."
DUH! THAT'S WHY I'M HAVING SUCH A BEAR OF A TIME WITH THIS MAGIC. IT'S NOT DONE *COOKING* YET!
THE NEW RULES ARE STILL BEING WRITTEN?
PRECISELY. THE QUESTION IS, BY WHOM?
IF IT'S A NATURAL PHENOMENON, WHY SUCH A DRASTIC CHANGE TO THE NATURE OF VAMPIRES...IN A WAY THAT SO GREATLY BENEFITS THEM?
YOU'RE SAYIN' THE GAME'S RIGGED?
I'M SAYING THAT IF ANYONE HAS THE MEANS TO INFLUENCE THE RULES OF EARTH'S NEW MAGIC...THEY ARE THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS IN THE WORLD.
WE NEED TO KNOW WHO THEY ARE. AND WE NEED TO STOP THEM...
...WHILE IT REMAINS POSSIBLE TO DO SO.

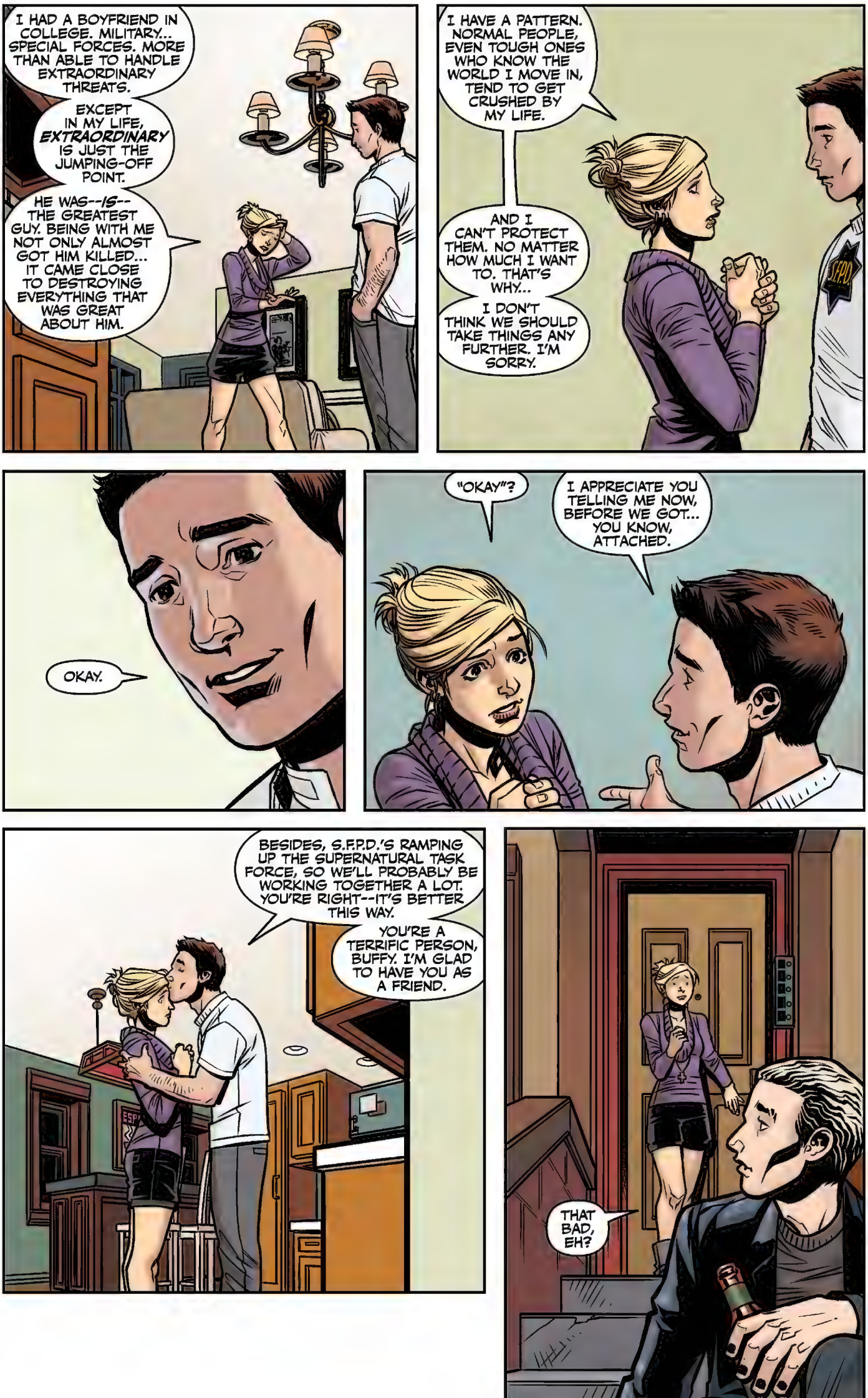

SAN FRANCISCO. XANDER AND DAWN'S APARTMENT.
SO, GILES...
...HOW DO WE FIND THE NEW BIG BAD? SHOULD I SHAKE SOMEBODY DOWN?
YEAH, AND WHY CAN'T I WALK IN THE SUN? ALL THIS "NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY" CRAP IS BLOODY UNFAIR.
IF YOU HELP ME WRANGLE THE MAGIC, I CAN CAST A *TIRER LA COUVERTURE*... TRACE WHOEVER'S MANIPULATING THE ENERGY.
I HAD A QUESTION ABOUT HAUNTINGS... ASKING FOR A FRIEND.
STOP IT!
PLEASE. I REALIZE I HAVE SOMEWHAT STEPPED BACK INTO MY FORMER ROLE AS MENTOR AND FATHER FIGURE. IN MANY WAYS, I FIND IT AS COMFORTING AS YOU.
BUT I WAS WRONG TO DO SO. YOU NO LONGER NEED THAT. MORE PRACTICALLY...
...I *CANNOT BE* THAT.

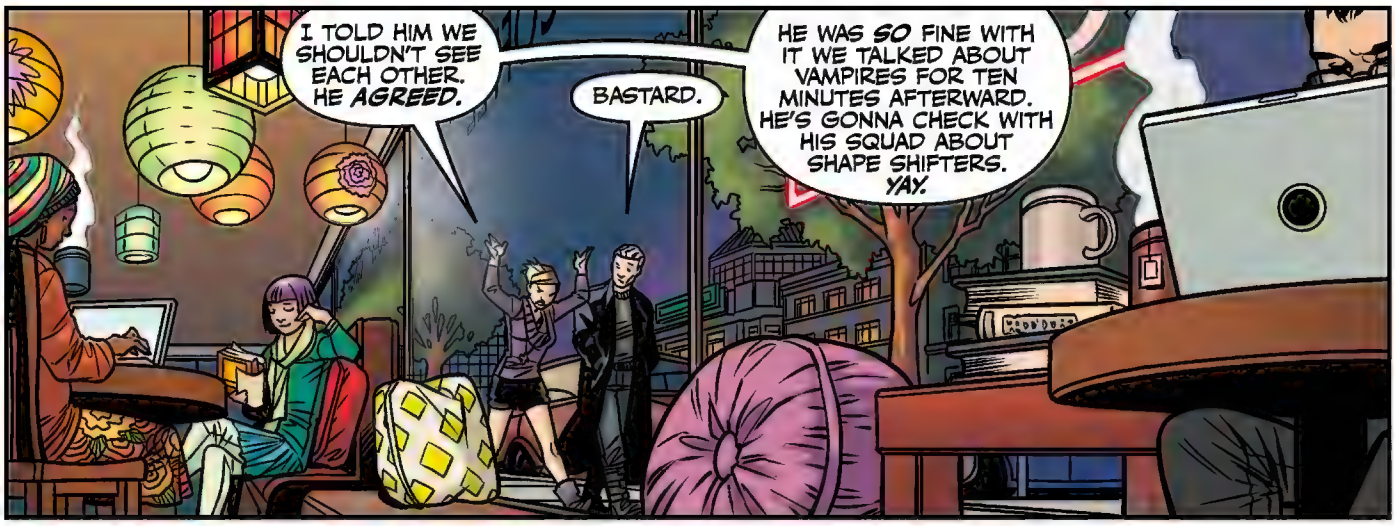

BUT--BUT YOU'RE THE GUY WHO KNOWS STUFF.
THE CHARLIE TO OUR ANGELS.
I'D GO WITH GANDALF. WIZARD, RESURRECTION... BUT WAIT, DOES THAT MAKE US HOBBITS?
NO! HOBBITS ARE ADULTS, AND YOU STILL ACT LIKE CHILDREN!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE ASKED TO MAKE EVERY SINGLE BLOODY DECISION, BECAUSE YOU'VE NEVER MADE YOUR OWN!
AH. THAT IS TO SAY...
AS I BELIEVE I'VE JUST DEMONSTRATED ALL TOO CLEARLY, THE CHANGES IN ME GO BEYOND THE COSMETIC.
I'M SORRY. BUT I AM SIMPLY... NOT WHAT I WAS.
HUH. HADN'T THOUGHT THROUGH THE IMPLICATIONS. I WAS A TINY HORMONAL MONSTER AT THAT AGE.
I WAS AN A.D.D. MESS. MOODY AND UNFOCUSED AND YOU CAN ALL STOP LOOKING AT ME LIKE YOU DON'T HAVE QUIRKS.
OKAY. POINT TAKEN. WE NEED TO COWBOY UP AND DECIDE WHAT TO DO FOR OURSELVES.
I COULD TRY THAT SPELL... BUT I'D NEED ONE OF THE NEW VAMPIRES TO USE AS A SOURCE.
YOUR COP FRIEND, SLAYER...DOWLING. RAN SOME SORT OF VAMPIRE TASK FORCE, DIDN'T HE? HE STILL GOT HIS FINGER ON THE LACK-OF-A-PULSE?
DOWLING! THAT'S A GREAT IDEA! HE MIGHT BE A LITTLE OUT OF TOUCH BECAUSE HE GOT HURT REALLY BAD AND--
OH, NO.
WE WERE ON A SLAY-DATE AND HE GOT ATTACKED BY ZOMPIRES. HE'S IN THE HOSPITAL. OR WAS.
I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF HE'S STILL IN THE HOSPITAL...

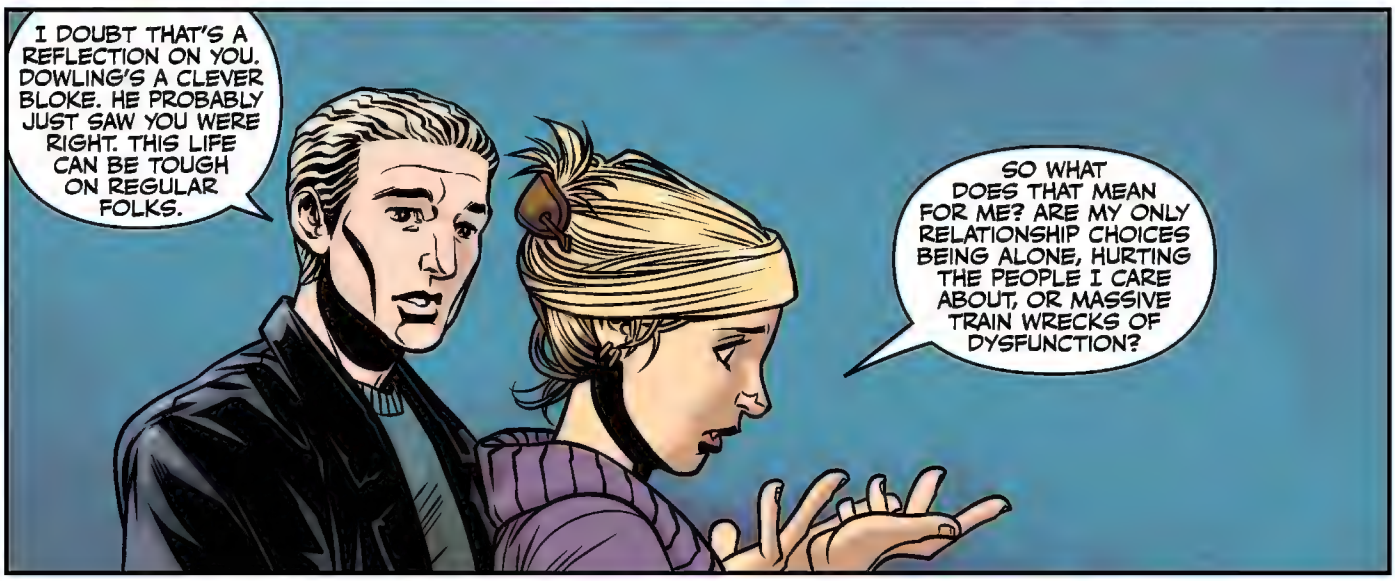
OKAY. I NEED TO LOOK UP DOWLING... FOR MULTIPLE REASONS.
BUT THERE'S NO GUARANTEE HE CAN HELP, SO WE SHOULD RUN DOWN OTHER LEADS. ANDREW'S RIGHT--THERE'S DEFINITELY A *DRACULA* ASPECT TO THESE NEW POWERS.
SINCE HE'S THE ONLY VAMP ON RECORD WHO BROKE THE RULES BEFORE, MAYBE HE CAN TELL US HOW IT'S DONE. XANDER, IS IT WEIRD FOR YOU TO GO TALK TO HIM?
WEIRD? ME? WHY? NOT AT ALL.
WE PARTED WITH A NEW UNDERSTANDING. AS EQUALS.
WILL SOMEONE COME WITH ME?
OH! *DAWN!* DAWN WILL GO.
YOU GUYS HAVEN'T HAD A QUIET MINUTE TOGETHER SINCE WE SAVED HER. YOU CAN MAKE IT A WORKING VACATION. I HEAR TRANSYLVANIA'S LOVELY THIS TIME OF YEAR.
UM, SURE. THAT SOUNDS... GREAT.
IF IT'S OKAY WITH YOU...?
OF COURSE! PERFECT!
THERE. SEE? SOUND, LOGICAL CHOICES. ARRIVED AT ENTIRELY ON YOUR OWN.
YOU DIDN'T NEED ME AFTER ALL.

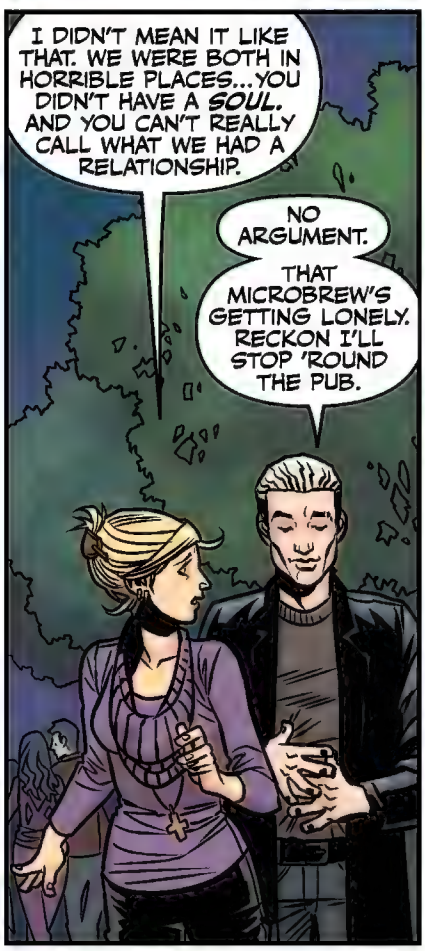
HOME OF DETECTIVE ROBERT DOWLING
THANKS FOR COMING. YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO.
COURSE I DID. DOWLING'S A GOOD BLOKE. PAYING HIM A VISIT'S THE ONLY DECENT THING TO DO.
I UNTHANK YOU.
LOOK, SLAYER, DON'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF. IT'S NOT AS IF YOU'RE HIS WIFE. I WASN'T GONE THAT LONG... HOW SERIOUS COULD YOU TWO HAVE BECOME?
UH, IF YOU DON'T MIND MY ASKING...
NOT SERIOUS AT ALL. ABOUT TEN MINUTES AFTER WE AGREED TO CALL OUR PATROL A DATE, I DISAPPEARED AND HE ALMOST GOT TORN TO PIECES.
BUT THAT'S NOT THE POINT. HE'S A FRIEND, A COMRADE IN ARMS...A FELLOW HUMAN BEING. HE ALMOST DIED FIGHTING AT MY SIDE AND I FORGOT.
HE'S GOT EVERY RIGHT TO HATE ME FOR--
BUFFY? SPIKE?
S.F.P.D.
IT'S SO GREAT TO SEE YOU BOTH!


CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING? WATER? MICROBREW?
IN MY CONTINUING QUEST TO BE THE WHITEST MAN IN AMERICA, I'VE DISCOVERED THIS APP WHERE YOU CHECK OFF A NEW BEER EVERY TIME YOU--
WE'RE FINE. I JUST WANTED TO SAY I'M SORRY.
S.F.P.D.
SORRY? FOR WHAT?
I WOULD'VE FANCIED ONE OF THOSE MICROBREWS.
ONLY EVERYTHING. PUSHING YOU TO ATTACK A NEST OF ZOMPIRES. ALMOST GETTING YOU KILLED ON OUR FIRST DATE.
BUFFY, I CHOSE TO DO THAT. NO PLAN SURVIVES CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY. THINGS HAPPEN.
MAYBE. BUT NOT EVEN CALLING TO SEE HOW YOU WERE...THAT'S ON ME.
BILLY TOLD ME YOUR SISTER WAS SICK. THEN I HEARD ABOUT SANTA ROSITA. YOU WERE BUSY. IT'S THE JOB. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO APOLOGIZE FOR.
YEAH. UM.
SPIKE, COULD YOU GIVE US A MINUTE?
TA, MATE, GLAD YOU'RE NOT DEAD.
I'LL JUST BE OUTSIDE.


I HAD A BOYFRIEND IN COLLEGE. MILITARY... SPECIAL FORCES. MORE THAN ABLE TO HANDLE EXTRAORDINARY THREATS.
EXCEPT IN MY LIFE, EXTRAORDINARY IS JUST THE JUMPING-OFF POINT.
HE WAS--IS--THE GREATEST GUY. BEING WITH ME NOT ONLY ALMOST GOT HIM KILLED... IT CAME CLOSE TO DESTROYING EVERYTHING THAT WAS GREAT ABOUT HIM.
I HAVE A PATTERN. NORMAL PEOPLE, EVEN TOUGH ONES WHO KNOW THE WORLD I MOVE IN, TEND TO GET CRUSHED BY MY LIFE.
AND I CAN'T PROTECT THEM. NO MATTER HOW MUCH I WANT TO. THAT'S WHY...
I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD TAKE THINGS ANY FURTHER. I'M SORRY.
S.F.P.D.
OKAY.
"OKAY"?
I APPRECIATE YOU TELLING ME NOW, BEFORE WE GOT... YOU KNOW, ATTACHED.
BESIDES, S.F.P.D.'S RAMPING UP THE SUPERNATURAL TASK FORCE, SO WE'LL PROBABLY BE WORKING TOGETHER A LOT. YOU'RE RIGHT--IT'S BETTER THIS WAY.
YOU'RE A TERRIFIC PERSON, BUFFY. I'M GLAD TO HAVE YOU AS A FRIEND.
THAT BAD, EH?


I TOLD HIM WE SHOULDN'T SEE EACH OTHER. HE *AGREED.*
BASTARD.
HE WAS *SO* FINE WITH IT WE TALKED ABOUT VAMPIRES FOR TEN MINUTES AFTERWARD. HE'S GONNA CHECK WITH HIS SQUAD ABOUT SHAPE SHIFTERS. *YAY.*

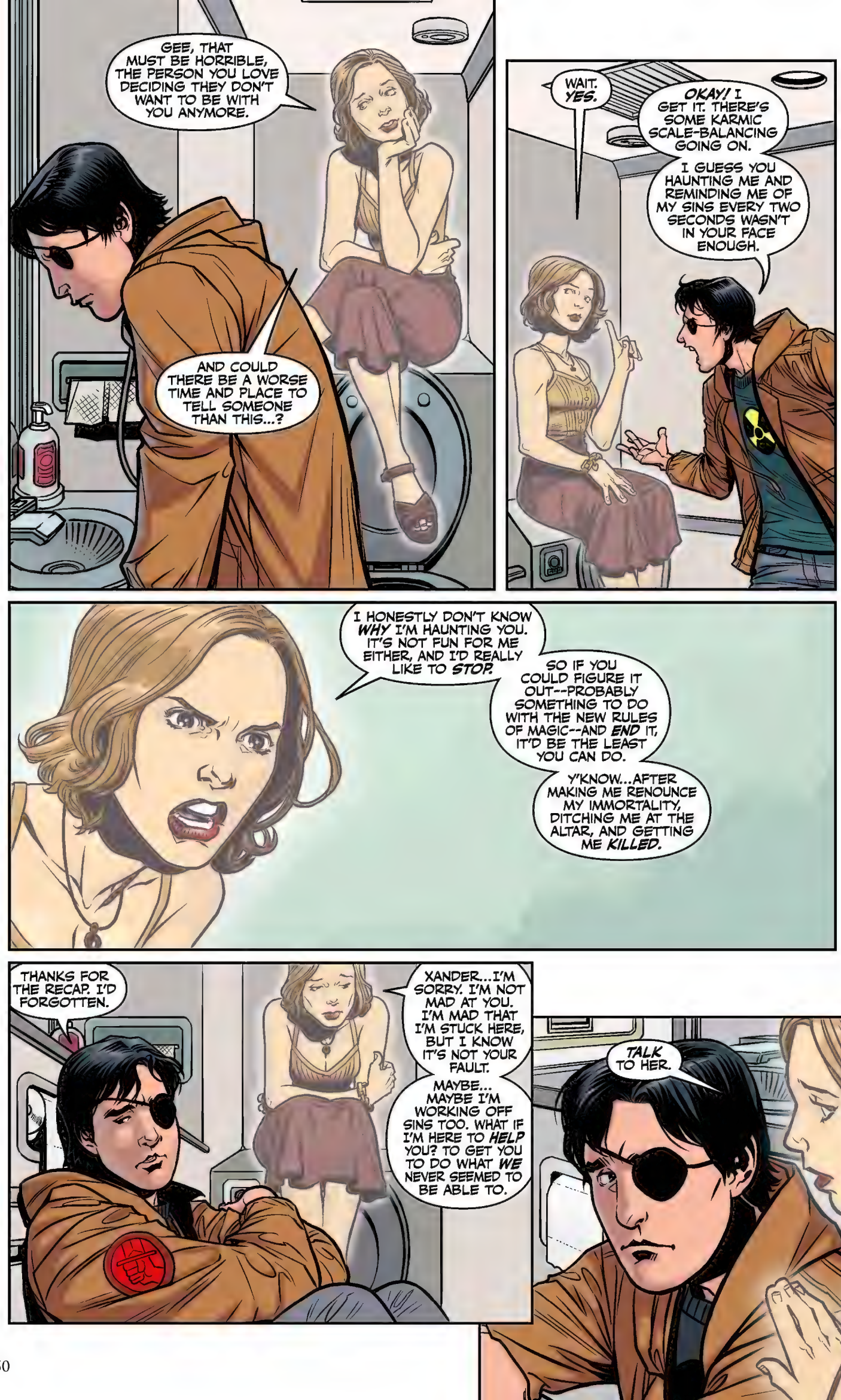

I DOUBT THAT'S A REFLECTION ON YOU. DOWLING'S A CLEVER BLOKE. HE PROBABLY JUST SAW YOU WERE RIGHT. THIS LIFE CAN BE TOUGH ON REGULAR FOLKS.
SO WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR ME? ARE MY ONLY RELATIONSHIP CHOICES BEING ALONE, HURTING THE PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT, OR MASSIVE TRAIN WRECKS OF DYSFUNCTION?


I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT. WE WERE BOTH IN HORRIBLE PLACES...YOU DIDN'T HAVE A *SOUL.* AND YOU CAN'T REALLY CALL WHAT WE HAD A RELATIONSHIP.
NO ARGUMENT.
THAT MICROBREW'S GETTING LONELY. RECKON I'LL STOP 'ROUND THE PUB.

SPIKE...
BLOODY HELL, WOMAN, IT AIN'T ALL ABOUT YOU. SOMETIMES A VAMPIRE WANTS A PINT. SEE YOU LATER.

BRILLIANT.
FACE IT, SUMMERS. THE CLOSEST YOU'LL EVER GET TO A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP...

THIRTY THOUSAND FEET OVER THE ATLANTIC.
"...IS VISITING XANDER AND DAWN."
SAYS HERE OUR SEAT CUSHIONS CAN BE USED AS A FLOTATION DEVICE.
YEAH. UH, I THINK THAT'S KINDA STANDARD.
BATHROOM.
SHE'S GOING TO BREAK UP WITH ME.
SMOKING
BECAUSE I BETRAYED BUFFY, EVEN IF IT WAS TO SAVE DAWN'S LIFE. OR MAYBE SHE'S JUST SICK OF MY MOOD SWINGS AND FREAK-OUTS AND RANDOM FITS OF RAGE.
SHE IS *TOTALLY* GOING TO BREAK UP WITH ME.

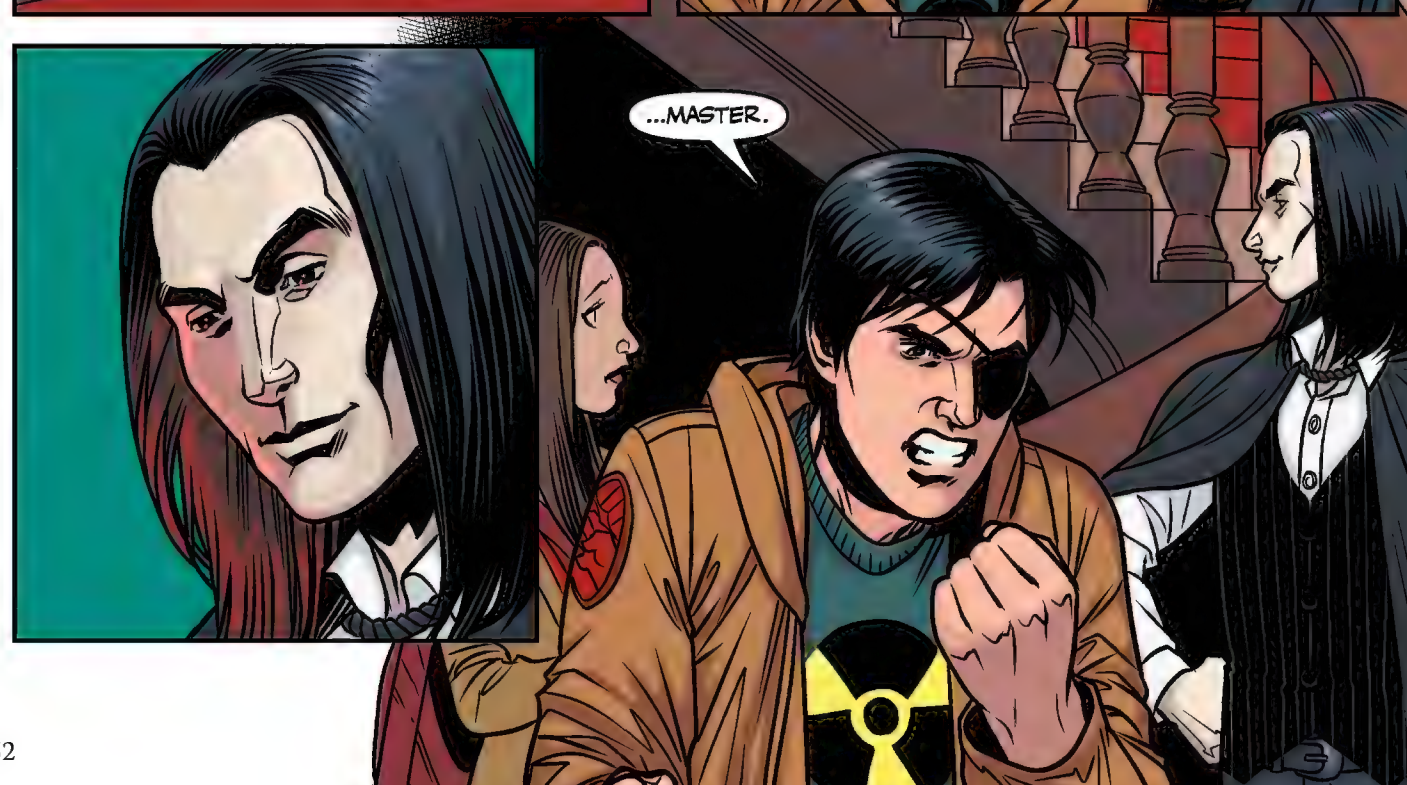

GEE, THAT MUST BE HORRIBLE, THE PERSON YOU LOVE DECIDING THEY DON'T WANT TO BE WITH YOU ANYMORE.
AND COULD THERE BE A WORSE TIME AND PLACE TO TELL SOMEONE THAN THIS...?
WAIT. YES.
OKAY! I GET IT. THERE'S SOME KARMIC SCALE-BALANCING GOING ON.
I GUESS YOU HAUNTING ME AND REMINDING ME OF MY SINS EVERY TWO SECONDS WASN'T IN YOUR FACE ENOUGH.
I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW WHY I'M HAUNTING YOU. IT'S NOT FUN FOR ME EITHER, AND I'D REALLY LIKE TO STOP.
SO IF YOU COULD FIGURE IT OUT--PROBABLY SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE NEW RULES OF MAGIC--AND END IT, IT'D BE THE LEAST YOU CAN DO.
Y'KNOW...AFTER MAKING ME RENOUNCE MY IMMORTALITY, DITCHING ME AT THE ALTAR, AND GETTING ME KILLED.
THANKS FOR THE RECAP. I'D FORGOTTEN.
XANDER...I'M SORRY. I'M NOT MAD AT YOU. I'M MAD THAT I'M STUCK HERE, BUT I KNOW IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
MAYBE... MAYBE I'M WORKING OFF SINS TOO. WHAT IF I'M HERE TO HELP YOU? TO GET YOU TO DO WHAT WE NEVER SEEMED TO BE ABLE TO.
TALK TO HER.

TRANSYLVANIA.
SO, UM...HOW TRUE IS THE NOVEL? I MEAN, IF WE KNOCK, WILL WE GET ATTACKED BY UNDEAD HOOCHIE MAMAS, OR...?
DAWN, WAIT.
THAT PLANE TRIP WAS JUST THE EXCRUCIATINGLY UNCOMFORTABLE ICING ON TOP OF A BUNDT CAKE OF AWKWARDNESS WE'VE BEEN FEASTING ON SINCE I GOT BACK FROM THE DEEPER WELL.
YEAH. I MEAN, I'M NOT SURE YOU REALLY KNOW WHAT A BUNDT CAKE IS, BUT--
THEY'RE ACTUALLY KINDA DELICIOUS, SO THE METAPHOR'S FLAWED. THE POINT IS...I *LOVE YOU,* DAWN. AND I DON'T WANT US TO BE LIKE THIS.
YOU KNOW YOU CAN TALK TO ME, RIGHT?
EVEN IF WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY IS... HARD.
I DO. AND I'M SORRY. I WAS TRYING TO FIGURE IT OUT MYSELF, BUT IT'S NOT FAIR FOR ME TO--
CREEEEEEK
HELLO, PEASANT.

NOT TO YOUR LIKING? BLAME YOUR COMPANION. I FOUND "MANSERVANT" PERFECTLY ADEQUATE, BUT HE TOOK RATHER LOUD EXCEPTION TO IT.
"PEASANT"?
NOW *HOLD ON ONE DAMN MINUTE!*

LISTEN UP, PRINCE OF DARKNESS. THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW. NO MORE MR. NICE XANDER!
THE LOVABLE CLASS CLOWN YOU TALKED DOWN TO AND PUSHED AROUND IS *LONG GONE.*

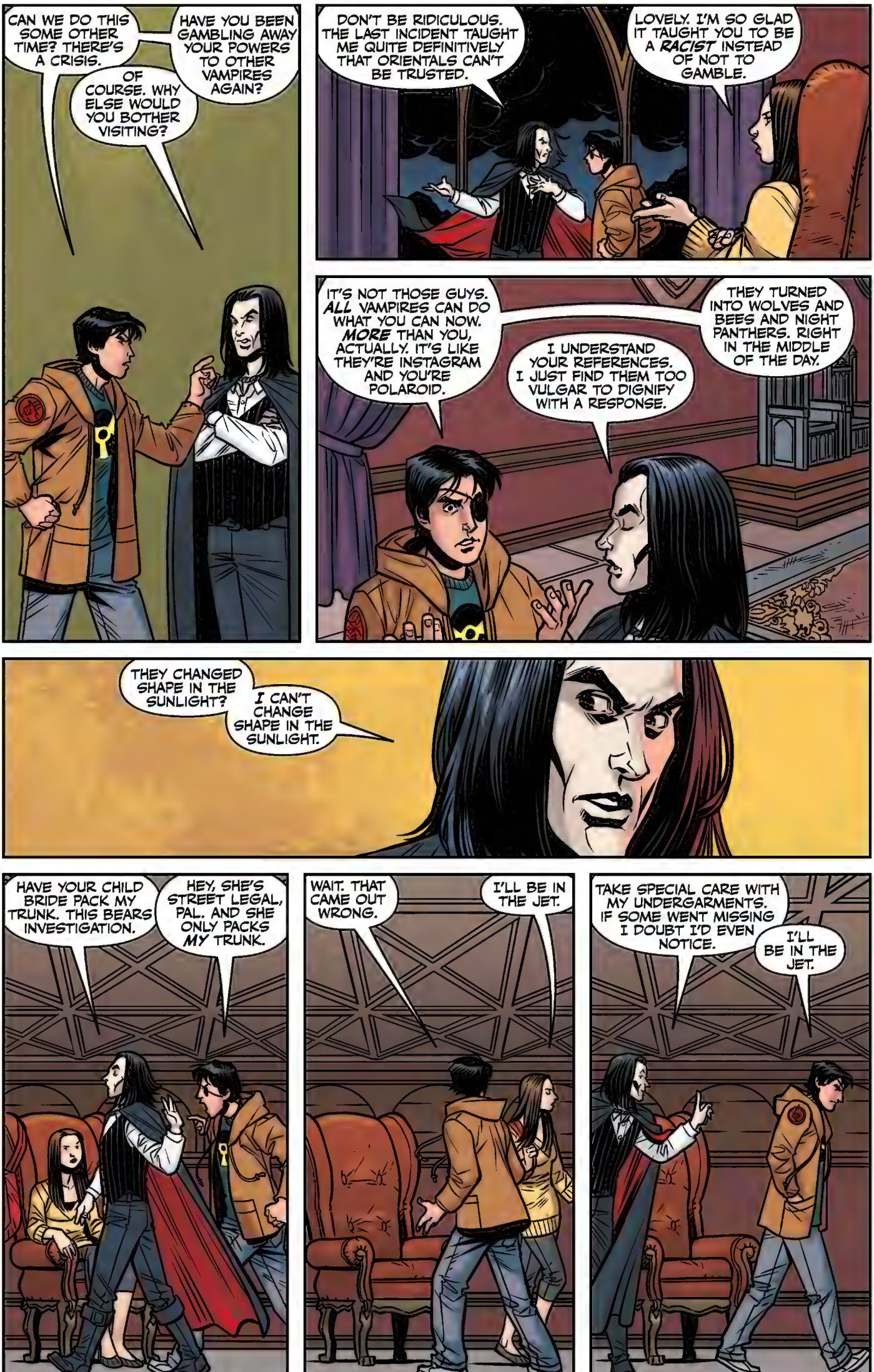
I'M A BOILING CAULDRON OF P.T.S.D.!
I'M THE COP ON THE EDGE! *DAMP DYNAMITE!* THE LOOSE CANNON YOU DON'T WANNA MESS WITH! *THE WORM HAS TURNED!*


...MASTER.

CASTLE DRACULA.
FORGIVE THE MESS. I'VE JUST HELD THE TRADITIONAL TUESDAY EVENING ORGY AND IT WAS FANTASTIC FUN. FANTASTIC FUN! YOU REMEMBER THE TUESDAY NIGHT ORGIES.
OH, YES... WE STARTED AFTER YOU LEFT. HOW SAD YOU HAD TO MISS THE ORGIES.
WAIT, WHAT? WAIT... NO, I THINK I'D REMEMBER A "FANTASTIC ORGY."
AND REALLY, IT'S A PITY YOU DON'T VISIT MORE. THE WEIRD SISTERS ARE BECOMING QUITE BORED WITH BUTTERFIELD. AREN'T THEY, BUTTERFIELD?
YAWNINGLY SO. BUT AS MANSERVANT, IT IS MY DUTY. IF ONLY THERE WERE ANOTHER TO SHARE THE BURDEN.
I THINK HE BELIEVES IT, MASTER!
BEGONE, WORM!
EXCUSE BUTTERFIELD. HE HAS TO PLAN THE NEXT ORGY.
DAWN, IF I ACT...FUNNY, IT GOES BACK TO THE FIRST TIME WE MET, WHEN HE PUT ME UNDER HIS MENTAL CONTROL--
I KNOW, XANDER, I WAS THERE. WELL, NOT THERE THERE. MY ACTUAL, PHYSICAL EXISTENCE STARTED RIGHT AFTER.
BUT THE SPELL THAT CREATED ME ALSO GAVE ME A WHOLE HISTORY AS BUFFY'S SISTER. SO I REMEMBER ALL THAT STUFF TOO, NOT JUST THE TIME IN JAPAN.
I HAVE NO MEMORY OF--WAIT. I DO RECALL A FRAIL CHILD WHO COWERED AND TREMBLED LIKE A FEARFUL RABBIT.
NO... THAT WAS YOU.

NEW RULES

PART THREE


CAN WE DO THIS SOME OTHER TIME? THERE'S A CRISIS.
HAVE YOU BEEN GAMBLING AWAY YOUR POWERS TO OTHER VAMPIRES AGAIN?
OF COURSE. WHY ELSE WOULD YOU BOTHER VISITING?
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. THE LAST INCIDENT TAUGHT ME QUITE DEFINITIVELY THAT ORIENTALS CAN'T BE TRUSTED.
LOVELY. I'M SO GLAD IT TAUGHT YOU TO BE A *RACIST* INSTEAD OF NOT TO GAMBLE.
IT'S NOT THOSE GUYS. *ALL* VAMPIRES CAN DO WHAT YOU CAN NOW. *MORE* THAN YOU, ACTUALLY. IT'S LIKE THEY'RE INSTAGRAM AND YOU'RE POLAROID.
I UNDERSTAND YOUR REFERENCES. I JUST FIND THEM TOO VULGAR TO DIGNIFY WITH A RESPONSE.
THEY TURNED INTO WOLVES AND BEES AND NIGHT PANTHERS. RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.
THEY CHANGED SHAPE IN THE SUNLIGHT?
I CAN'T CHANGE SHAPE IN THE SUNLIGHT.
HAVE YOUR CHILD BRIDE PACK MY TRUNK. THIS BEARS INVESTIGATION.
HEY, SHE'S STREET LEGAL, PAL. AND SHE ONLY PACKS *MY* TRUNK.
WAIT. THAT CAME OUT WRONG.
I'LL BE IN THE JET.
TAKE SPECIAL CARE WITH MY UNDERGARMENTS. IF SOME WENT MISSING I DOUBT I'D EVEN NOTICE.
I'LL BE IN THE JET.

SAN FRANCISCO. THE RUINS OF THE SUTRO BATHS.
YOU SURE THIS'LL WORK? I HEARD WHEN VAMPIRES *SIRE* PEOPLE NOW, THEY TURN INTO THOSE DROOLING MONSTERS.
ZOMPIRES? YOU'RE BEHIND THE TIMES, KID. MAGIC'S BACK, AND WE'RE BETTER THAN EVER.
WE SIRE YOU, AND YOU'LL BE MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU EVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE. STRONG. *IMMORTAL*, AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO--
--THIS!
AAH!
UM, WE CHANGED OUR MINDS. WE WANNA THINK ABOUT IT SOME MORE.
I TOLD YOU, JOEY, YOU ALWAYS OVERDO IT WITH THE SHAPE SHIFTING. IT FREAKS HUMANS OUT.
I'M HUNGRY ANYWAY. LET'S JUST KILL 'EM AND START OVER.
VERMIN!
YOU HAVE THE TEMERITY NOT ONLY TO STEAL POWER THAT IS MINE BY RIGHT OF CONQUEST...BUT TO GRANT IT TO *MORTALS?*
KNEEL BEFORE YOUR MASTER AND *BEG FORGIVENESS!*

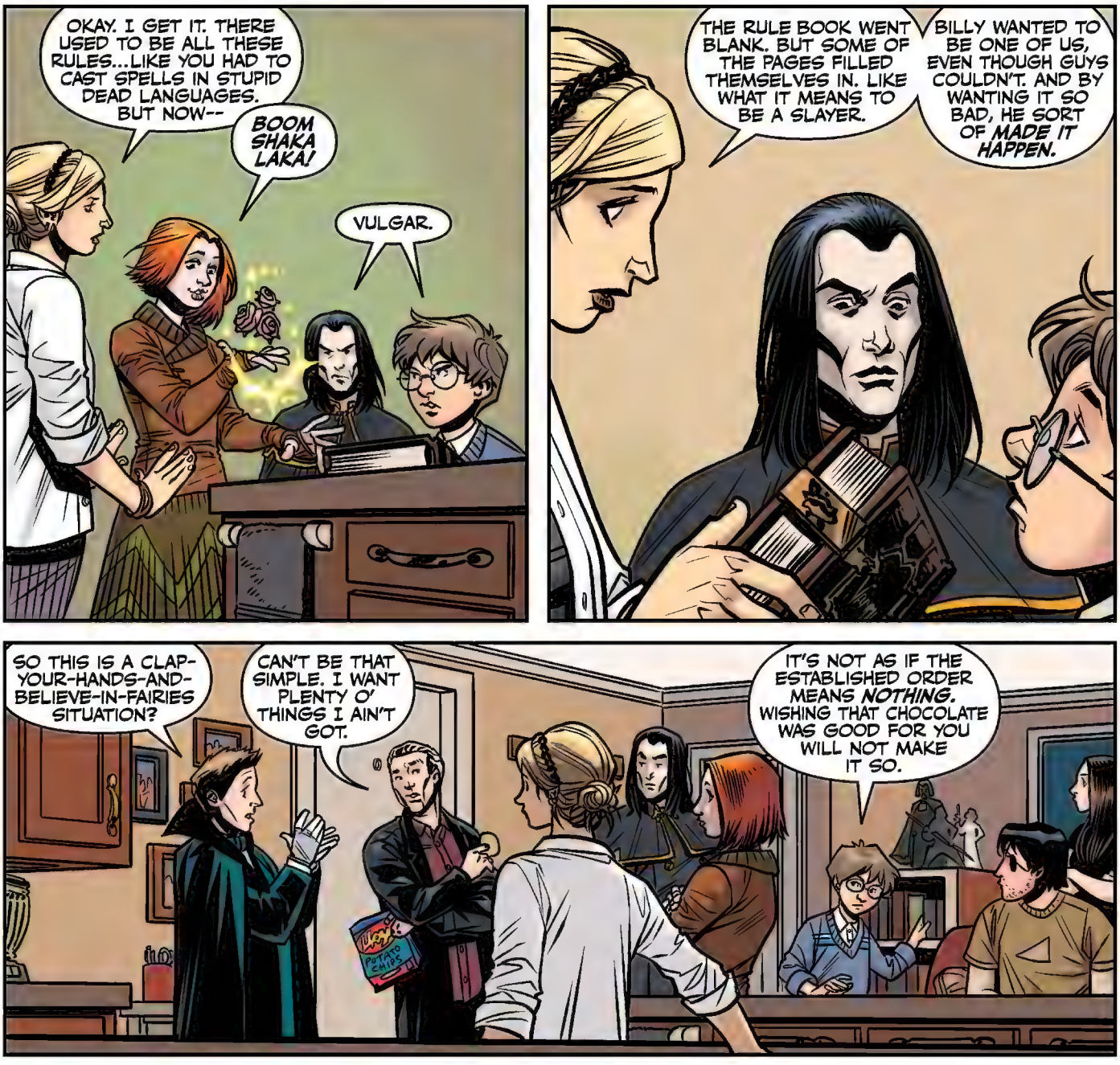
HAAA HAHA! CLASSIC! TOTAL HIGH CAMP!
THAT'S NOT FUNNY, IT'S JUST SAD. HE'S LIKE THE OLD LION WHO DOESN'T KNOW HIS TIME'S OVER...
...UNTIL THE YOUNG LIONS TEAR HIM APART.
YOU DARE--?
OH, THEY DARE.
SHHKTT
KIDS TODAY. NO RESPECT.
PAFT
THE NIGHT PANTHER? I INVENTED THE NIGHT PANTHER!
THINGS HAVE CHANGED, SLAYER. WE CAN TAKE YOU TWO RELICS.
NOT LIKELY. BUT EVEN IF YOU COULD--

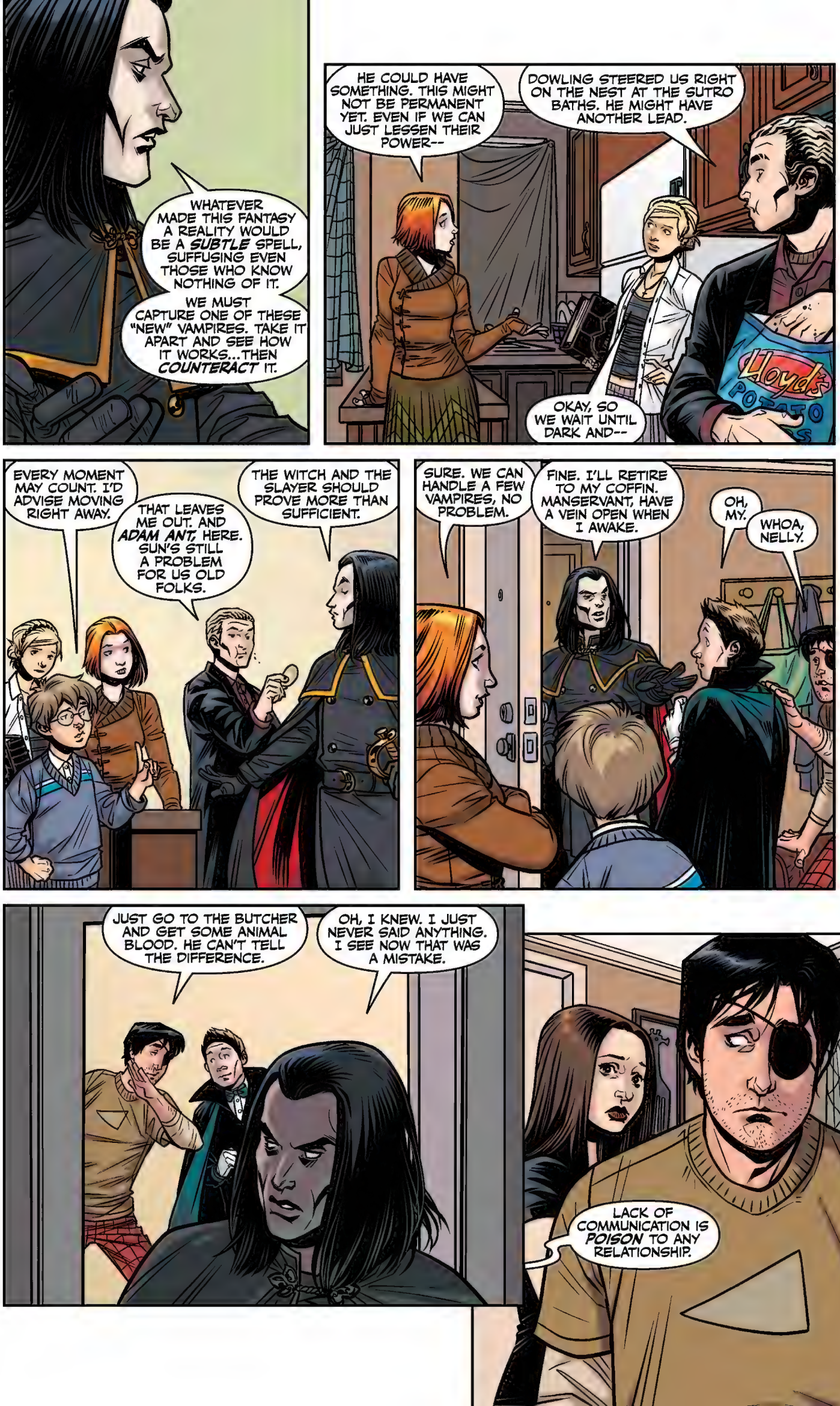
--WE'RE NOT THE *ONLY* RELICS IN TOWN.
YOUR BADASS INTRO LINES NEED WORK, SLAYER.
THEY'RE HARD. I SHOULD HIRE A BADASS LINE WRITER.
I TRIED THAT. HE TURNED MY LIFE INTO BODICE-RIPPING *HACKWORK* FOR REPRESSED VICTORIAN MATRONS.
NEVER TRUST A WRITER.
SCREW THIS. I'M OUTTA HERE.
TRY CATCHING *MIST*, LOSERS.

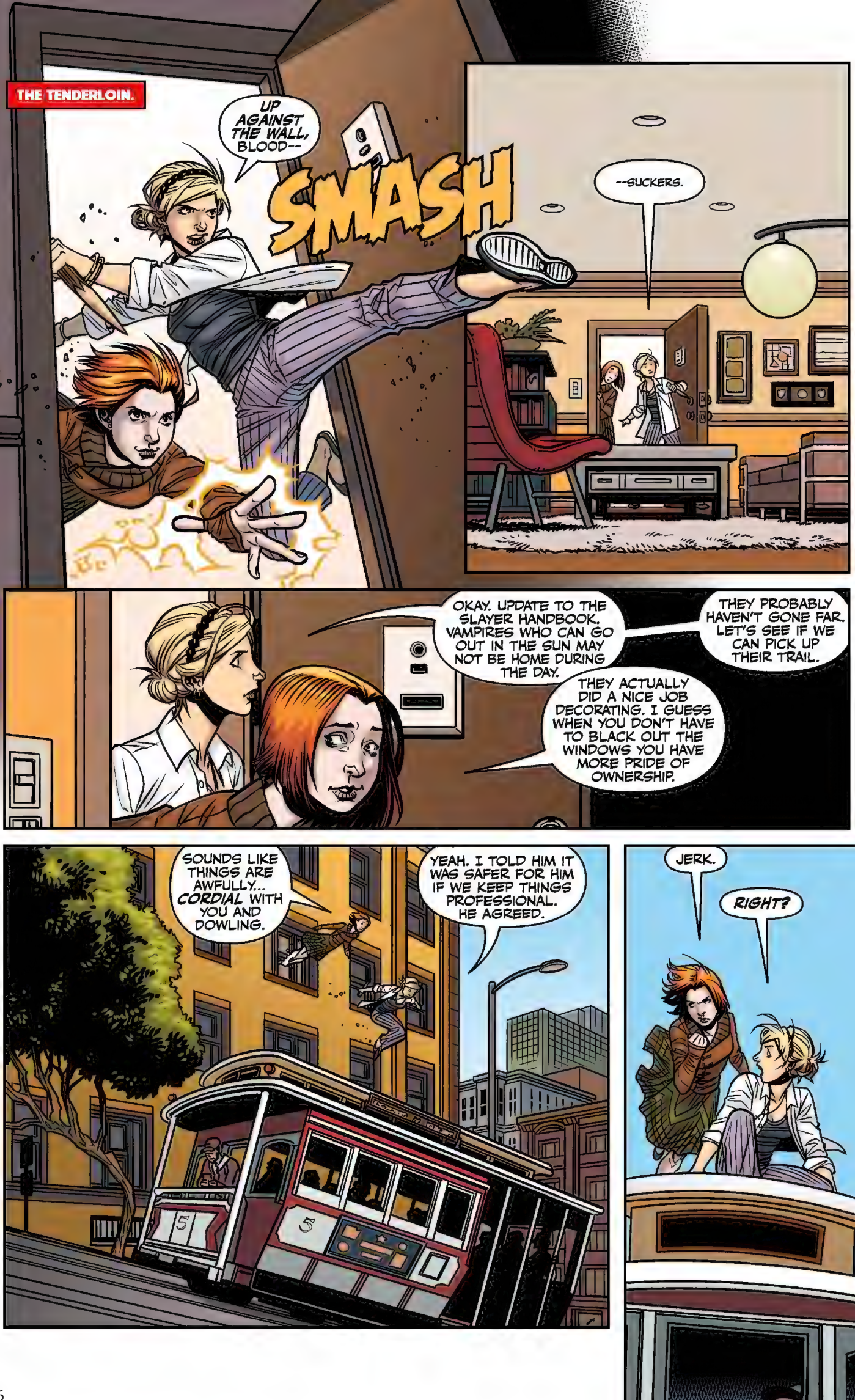
MIST IS A TRANSITION STATE OF LIQUID.
A SIMPLE TRANSFORMATION SPELL ON SOME HOLY WATER...
...AND VOILÀ! HOLY MIST.
AAIIEEE!
PAFT
AND PEOPLE THINK WITCHES DON'T APPRECIATE SCIENCE.
UH, WILLOW, I THINK MIST TURNING TO DUST BREAKS A WHOLE BUNCH OF LAWS OF NATURE.
I WON'T TELL IF YOU WON'T.
WELL, COUNT PONCE? YOU SEEN 'EM FOR YOURSELF. WHAT'S THE VERDICT?
THAT YOU ARE COMMON AND ILL MANNERED. IN TIMES PAST, YOU WOULD HAVE SHOWN ME DEFERENCE, OR YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPALED.
BUT CLEARLY THE WORLD I KNEW IS GONE.
SHOW ME TO MY ACCOMMODATIONS. I MUST THINK UPON THIS.

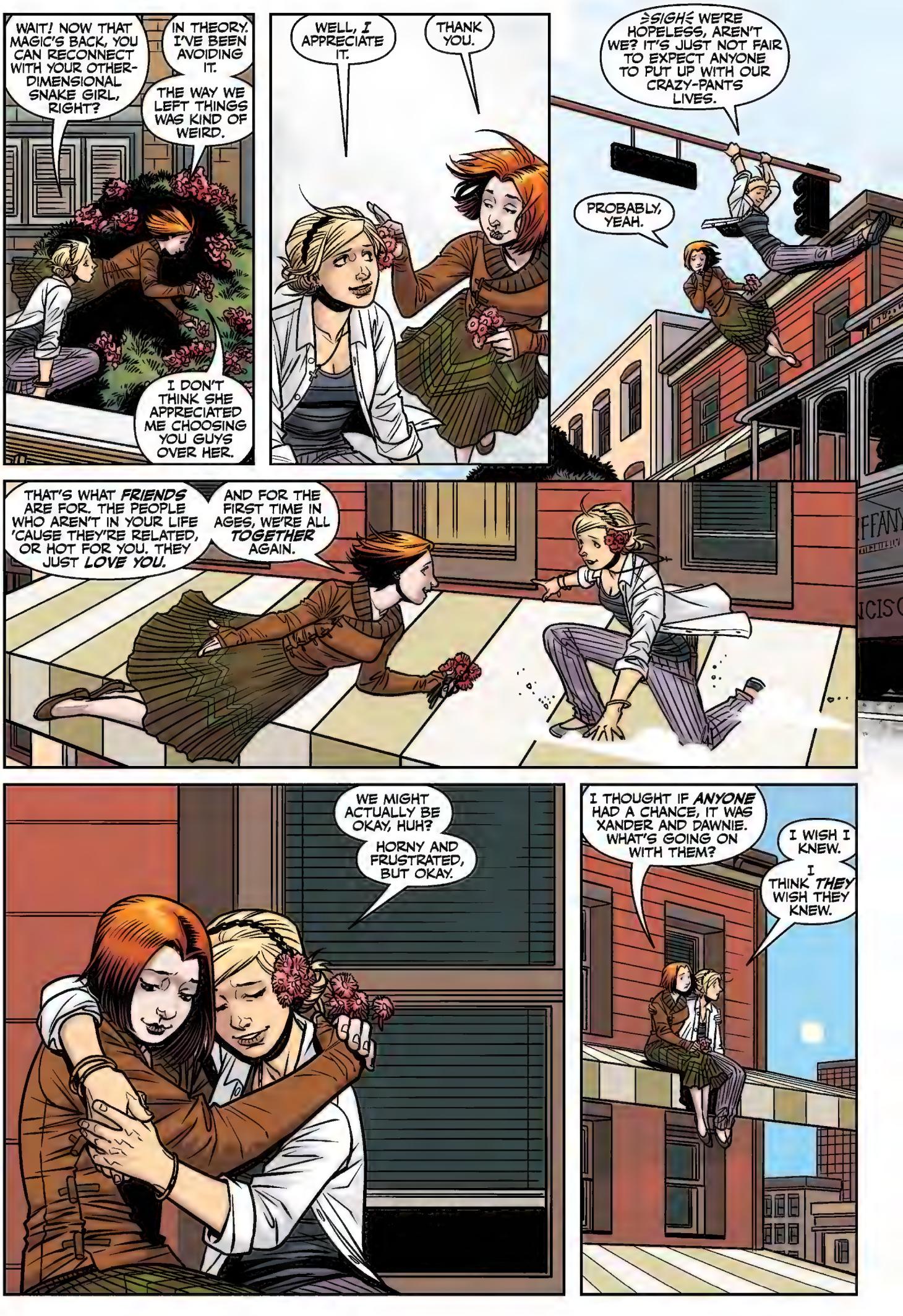
WHAT WRETCHED HOVEL--?
AH, THE SERVANT'S QUARTERS. I ASSUME THE ROYAL SUITE IS UPSTAIRS?
THIS IS WHERE I LIVE.
IT'S THIS OR MY PLACE. WHICH HAS A NEIGHBOR WHO PRACTICES HIS OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN DRAG SHOW ALL DAY.
YOU CAN STAY WITH ME, MR. TEPES. OR IS IT MR. DRACUL? THAT WAS MORE OF A TITLE, RIGHT? I'M ANDREW WELLS. HUGE FAN. JUST A COINCIDENCE I WORE THIS TODAY.
HMPH. YOU'RE CLOYING, BUT PROPERLY OBSEQUIOUS. AND I AM IN THE MARKET FOR A MANSERVANT WHO APPRECIATES THE PRIVILEGE OF HIS POSITION.
CAN WE GET BACK ON TOPIC, PLEASE?
AH, YOU'VE PREPARED ME A SNACK. GOOD. I AM RATHER PECKISH.
ENOUGH! HE CLEARLY DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING. WHICH MEANS THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY HE CAN BE OF USE TO US, SO LET'S GET TO IT.
YOU'RE THE ENGLISHMAN... THE WATCHER. I RECOGNIZE THE SCENT OF YOUR BLOOD. YOU'VE SHRUNK.
XANDER SAYS YOU MENTIONED GETTING YOUR POWERS THROUGH "DARK MAGICS." TELL US WHAT. SPECIFICALLY.
IN THE NAME OF MALOKER, PROGENITOR OF ALL YOUR KIND, WE COMMAND IT. YOU CAN NEITHER REFUSE NOR DISSEMBLE.
THERE'S NO NEED TO BE RUDE. I'M HAPPY TO SHARE MY SECRET.
THE SPELLS ARE MERE WINDOW DRESSING. I AM LORD OF ALL VAMPIRES BECAUSE I WILL IT TO BE SO. AND IT IS SO BECAUSE I WILL IT.
I AM DRACULA. COULD I BE ANY LESS?

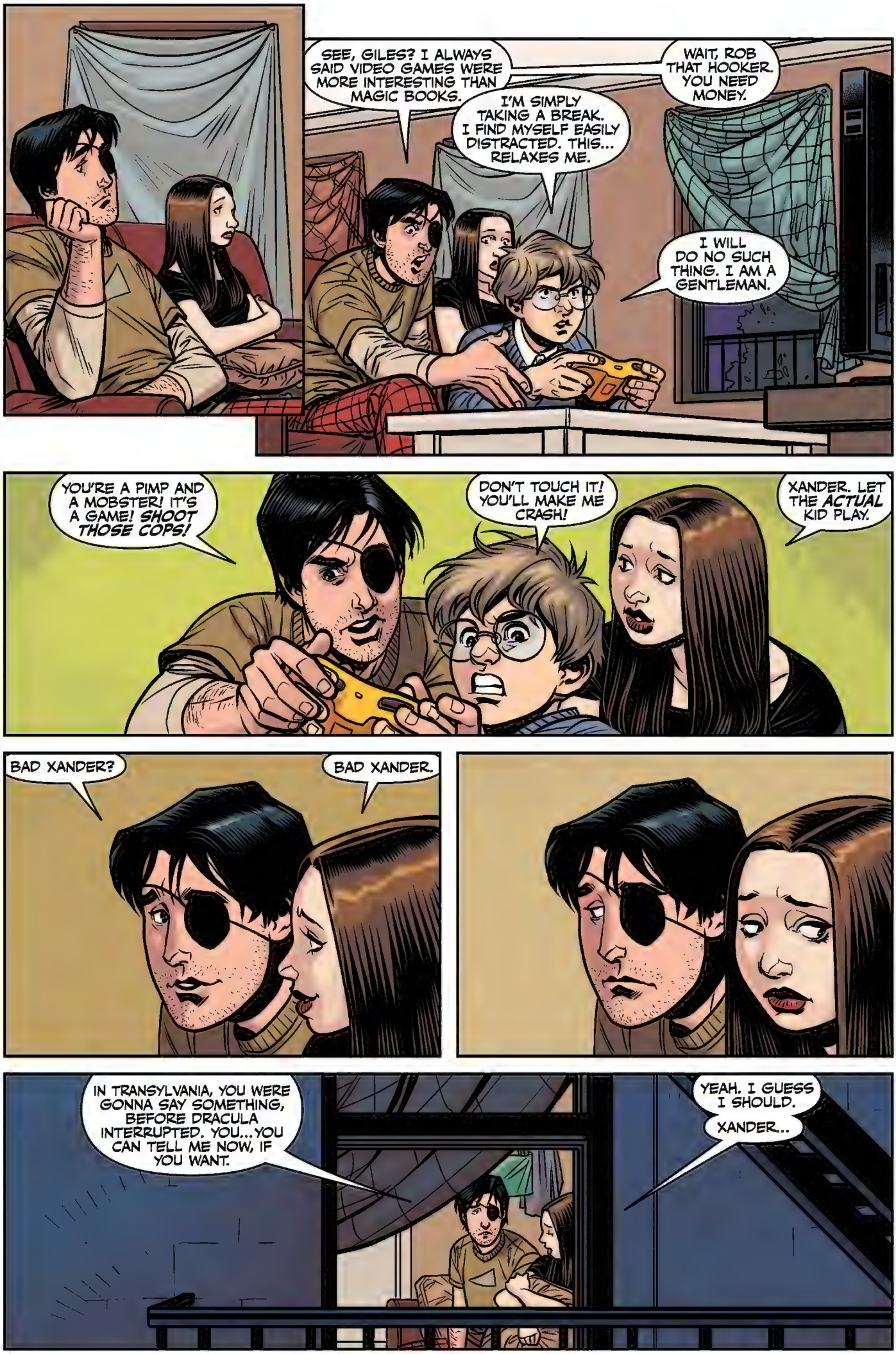
YOU EXPECT US TO BELIEVE YOU GOT YOUR POWERS THROUGH POSITIVE THINKING?
HOLY DEEPAK CHOPRA, BATMAN!
IF THAT WORKED, I'D BE THE BLACK WIDOW.
HEY, WE CAN MAKE THAT HAPPEN.
OH, YOU MEAN-- OH!
SORRY, WAS THAT-- I THOUGHT AFTER THE SUCCESS OF THE PIRATE/NOBLEWOMAN SCENARIO WE WERE GONNA KEEP--CRAP. BAD XANDER, BAD!
WE WERE TALKING ABOUT ME.
I'M GONNA PRETEND I DIDN'T JUST FIND OUT MY BABY SISTER'S INTO JACK SPARROW ROLE PLAYING. IS WHAT DRAC SAID POSSIBLE?
AND IF THE RITUALS DRACULA USED WERE DESIGNED TO REINFORCE AND STRENGTHEN HIS WILLPOWER...
WELL, AT ITS CORE, MAGIC IS THE IMPOSITION OF ONE'S WILL UPON REALITY ITSELF.
BELLS AND WHISTLES, REALLY. EVEN AS A MORTAL, MY WILL WAS UNRIVALED. BUT YES, YOU GRASP THE BASICS.
SO, CLEARLY, THERE IS NO CONNECTION. THOSE PLEBEIANS WE ENCOUNTERED COULD NEVER HAVE ACHIEVED WHAT TOOK ME DECADES.
NOT UNDER THE OLD WAYS. BUT AS I KEEP HAVING TO REMIND EVERYONE...
...THOSE LAWS OF MAGIC NO LONGER EXIST.


OKAY. I GET IT. THERE USED TO BE ALL THESE RULES...LIKE YOU HAD TO CAST SPELLS IN STUPID DEAD LANGUAGES. BUT NOW--
BOOM SHAKA LAKA!
VULGAR.
THE RULE BOOK WENT BLANK. BUT SOME OF THE PAGES FILLED THEMSELVES IN. LIKE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A SLAYER.
BILLY WANTED TO BE ONE OF US, EVEN THOUGH GUYS COULDN'T. AND BY WANTING IT SO BAD, HE SORT OF MADE IT HAPPEN.
SO THIS IS A CLAP-YOUR-HANDS-AND-BELIEVE-IN-FAIRIES SITUATION?
CAN'T BE THAT SIMPLE. I WANT PLENTY O' THINGS I AIN'T GOT.
IT'S NOT AS IF THE ESTABLISHED ORDER MEANS NOTHING. WISHING THAT CHOCOLATE WAS GOOD FOR YOU WILL NOT MAKE IT SO.
BUT TO MANY, DRACULA IS EMBLEMATIC OF ALL VAMPIRES.
STOKER AND HIS DAMNABLE BOOK. MANSERVANT, REMIND ME TO URINATE ON HIS GRAVE.
YES, MASTER.
WAIT, SINCE WHEN IS HE--?
SO VAMPIRES WANTED TO BE STRONGER. AND SINCE PEOPLE ALREADY ACCEPT DRACULA AS THE MODEL, IT WAS AN EASY GET.
NOW THAT WE KNOW HOW THEY DID IT...CAN WE UNDO IT?


WHATEVER MADE THIS FANTASY A REALITY WOULD BE A *SUBTLE* SPELL, SUFFUSING EVEN THOSE WHO KNOW NOTHING OF IT.
WE MUST CAPTURE ONE OF THESE "NEW" VAMPIRES. TAKE IT APART AND SEE HOW IT WORKS...THEN *COUNTERACT* IT.
HE COULD HAVE SOMETHING. THIS MIGHT NOT BE PERMANENT YET. EVEN IF WE CAN JUST LESSEN THEIR POWER--
DOWLING STEERED US RIGHT ON THE NEST AT THE SUTRO BATHS. HE MIGHT HAVE ANOTHER LEAD.
OKAY, SO WE WAIT UNTIL DARK AND--
Lloyds POTATO
EVERY MOMENT MAY COUNT. I'D ADVISE MOVING RIGHT AWAY.
THAT LEAVES ME OUT. AND *ADAM ANT,* HERE. SUN'S STILL A PROBLEM FOR US OLD FOLKS.
THE WITCH AND THE SLAYER SHOULD PROVE MORE THAN SUFFICIENT.
SURE. WE CAN HANDLE A FEW VAMPIRES, NO PROBLEM.
FINE. I'LL RETIRE TO MY COFFIN. MANSERVANT, HAVE A VEIN OPEN WHEN I AWAKE.
OH, MY.
WHOA, NELLY.
JUST GO TO THE BUTCHER AND GET SOME ANIMAL BLOOD. HE CAN'T TELL THE DIFFERENCE.
OH, I KNEW. I JUST NEVER SAID ANYTHING. I SEE NOW THAT WAS A MISTAKE.
LACK OF COMMUNICATION IS *POISON* TO ANY RELATIONSHIP.

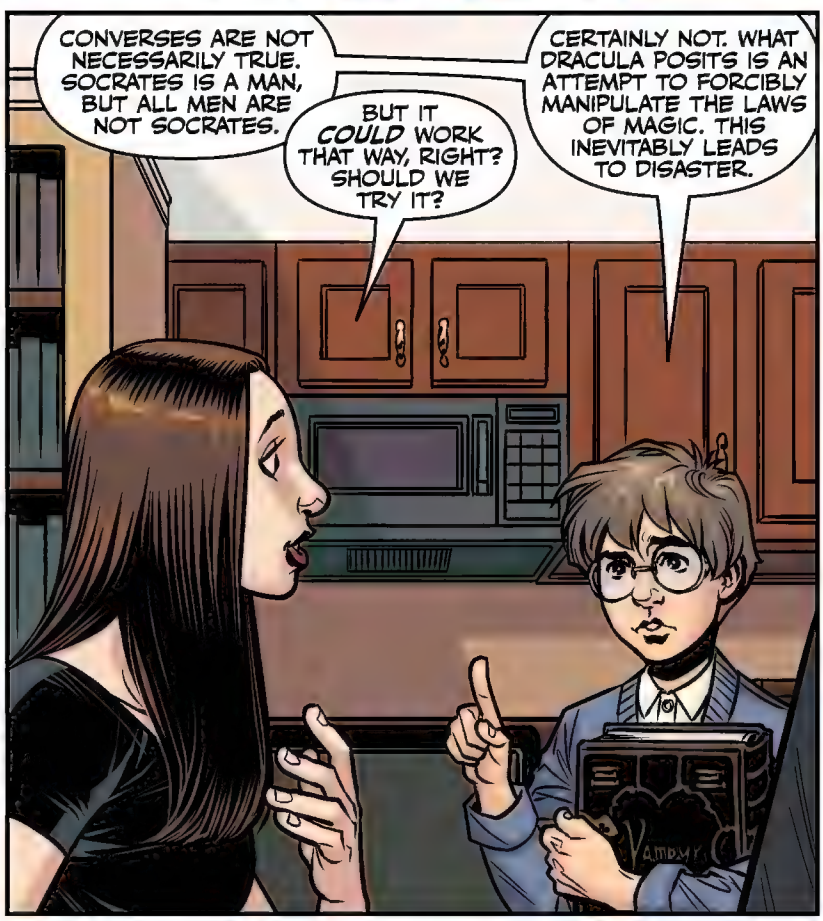

THE TENDERLOIN.
UP AGAINST THE WALL, BLOOD--
SMASH
--SUCKERS.
OKAY. UPDATE TO THE SLAYER HANDBOOK. VAMPIRES WHO CAN GO OUT IN THE SUN MAY NOT BE HOME DURING THE DAY.
THEY PROBABLY HAVEN'T GONE FAR. LET'S SEE IF WE CAN PICK UP THEIR TRAIL.
THEY ACTUALLY DID A NICE JOB DECORATING. I GUESS WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE TO BLACK OUT THE WINDOWS YOU HAVE MORE PRIDE OF OWNERSHIP.
SOUNDS LIKE THINGS ARE AWFULLY... CORDIAL WITH YOU AND DOWLING.
YEAH. I TOLD HIM IT WAS SAFER FOR HIM IF WE KEEP THINGS PROFESSIONAL. HE AGREED.
JERK.
RIGHT?


WAIT! NOW THAT MAGIC'S BACK, YOU CAN RECONNECT WITH YOUR OTHER-DIMENSIONAL SNAKE GIRL, RIGHT?
IN THEORY. I'VE BEEN AVOIDING IT.
THE WAY WE LEFT THINGS WAS KIND OF WEIRD.
I DON'T THINK SHE APPRECIATED ME CHOOSING YOU GUYS OVER HER.
WELL, I APPRECIATE IT.
THANK YOU.
≥SIGH≤ WE'RE HOPELESS, AREN'T WE? IT'S JUST NOT FAIR TO EXPECT ANYONE TO PUT UP WITH OUR CRAZY-PANTS LIVES.
PROBABLY, YEAH.
THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR. THE PEOPLE WHO AREN'T IN YOUR LIFE 'CAUSE THEY'RE RELATED, OR HOT FOR YOU. THEY JUST LOVE YOU.
AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AGES, WE'RE ALL TOGETHER AGAIN.
WE MIGHT ACTUALLY BE OKAY, HUH?
HORNY AND FRUSTRATED, BUT OKAY.
I THOUGHT IF ANYONE HAD A CHANCE, IT WAS XANDER AND DAWNIE. WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THEM?
I WISH I KNEW.
I THINK THEY WISH THEY KNEW.

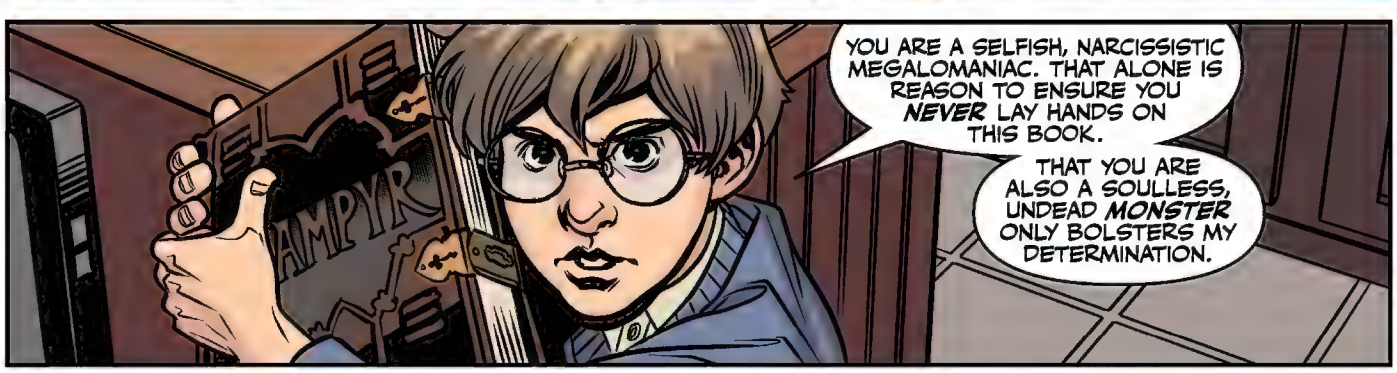

SEE, GILES? I ALWAYS SAID VIDEO GAMES WERE MORE INTERESTING THAN MAGIC BOOKS.
I'M SIMPLY TAKING A BREAK. I FIND MYSELF EASILY DISTRACTED. THIS... RELAXES ME.
WAIT, ROB THAT HOOKER. YOU NEED MONEY.
I WILL DO NO SUCH THING. I AM A GENTLEMAN.
YOU'RE A PIMP AND A MOBSTER! IT'S A GAME! SHOOT THOSE COPS!
DON'T TOUCH IT! YOU'LL MAKE ME CRASH!
XANDER. LET THE ACTUAL KID PLAY.
BAD XANDER?
BAD XANDER.
IN TRANSYLVANIA, YOU WERE GONNA SAY SOMETHING, BEFORE DRACULA INTERRUPTED. YOU...YOU CAN TELL ME NOW, IF YOU WANT.
YEAH. I GUESS I SHOULD.
XANDER...

TREMBLE, MORTALS! FOR NIGHT HAS FALLEN, AND DRACULA WALKS ABROAD AMONG MEN!
GUH. XANDER, YOU HAVE MY ADMIRATION. SOMEONE IS HIGH MAINTENANCE.
MOST OF MY MANSERVANTING WAS DONE UNDER HYPNOSIS. MAKES IT EASIER.
HMPH. FOR ALL MY POWER, I CAN ONLY MESMERIZE A MORTAL IF THEY ARE WEAK MINDED... OR SECRETLY WANT IT. I BELIEVE YOU MAY BE BOTH.
ARE YOU ALL DETERMINED TO INFURIATE ME? CAN I AT LEAST GET BACK TO WORK IN PEACE?
NO NEED. THAT IS WHY I HAVE COME. TO SOLVE EVERYTHING.
THAT BOOK-- VAMPYR. IT IS THE ORIGINAL, YES? THE FIRST ATTEMPT BY MAN TO RECORD AND CODIFY THE LAWS OF MAGIC.
IT IS. INITIALLY, A STUDY OF VAMPIRES--THE MOST PRESSING THREAT. OVER TIME, ITS SCOPE GREW.
AS DID THE BOOK'S POWER. IT HAS BECOME, BY COMMON ACCEPTANCE, THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO MAGIC ON EARTH.
WILL THERE BE ANY POINT AT WHICH YOU TELL US SOMETHING WE DO NOT ALREADY KNOW?
WE HAVE SEEN THAT AS NEW LAWS OF MAGIC ARE CREATED, THEY ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK.
MIGHT WORDS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK NOT THEN BECOME THE NEW LAWS OF MAGIC?

HOLY CONVERSE LOGIC.


CONVERSES ARE NOT NECESSARILY TRUE. SOCRATES IS A MAN, BUT ALL MEN ARE NOT SOCRATES.
BUT IT *COULD* WORK THAT WAY, RIGHT? SHOULD WE TRY IT?
CERTAINLY NOT. WHAT DRACULA POSITS IS AN ATTEMPT TO FORCIBLY MANIPULATE THE LAWS OF MAGIC. THIS INEVITABLY LEADS TO DISASTER.

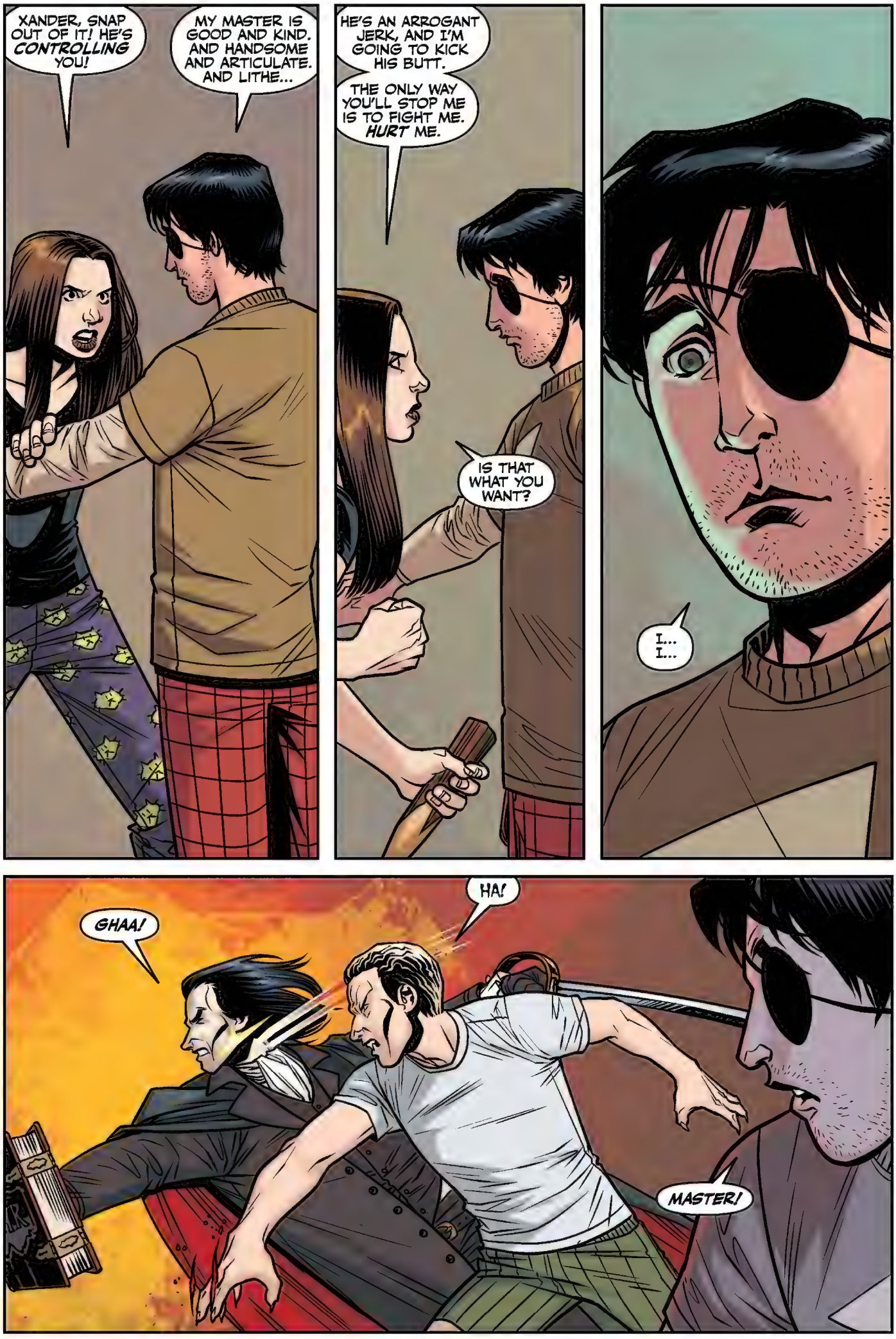
AS EVER, THE COMMONERS REQUIRE A NOBLE TO LEAD THEM.
GIVE ME THE BOOK. I SHALL PUT MY THEOREM TO THE TEST.


YOU ARE A SELFISH, NARCISSISTIC MEGALOMANIAC. THAT ALONE IS REASON TO ENSURE YOU *NEVER* LAY HANDS ON THIS BOOK.
THAT YOU ARE ALSO A SOULLESS, UNDEAD *MONSTER* ONLY BOLSTERS MY DETERMINATION.

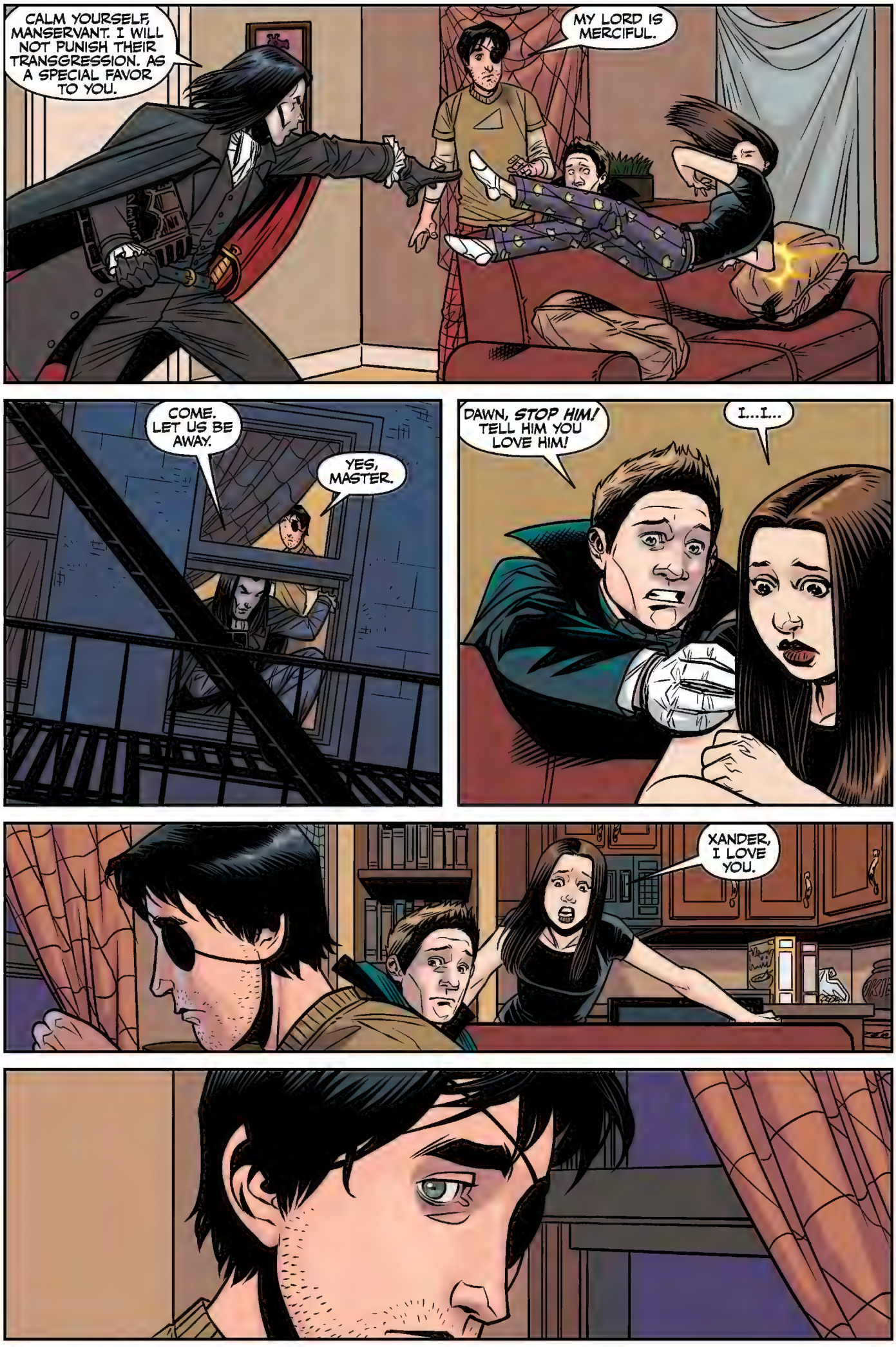
I MIGHT FIND THAT INSULTING.
WERE I IN THE HABIT OF ASKING *PERMISSION* FROM *LIVESTOCK.*

IGNIS--
KLONK
XANDER! WHAT ARE YOU--
VAMPIRIC MESMERISM! HE'S IN THE CLUTCHES OF DRACULA!
MY MANSERVANT UNDERSTANDS THAT HIS MASTER KNOWS BEST.
OI! WHAT'S ALL THE BLOODY RACKET?
DRACULA'S MADE A HEEL TURN! HE PLAYED US! QUITE BRILLIANTLY!

DEFY ME AT YOUR PERIL. I AM DRACULA. I AM YOUR LORD!
I DON'T RECALL A VOTE. I DO RECALL WANTIN' TO TAKE YOUR HEAD OFF.
THANKS FOR GIVIN' ME AN EXCUSE.
HE CAN'T TURN INTO MIST WITHOUT LOSING THE BOOK! WE CAN RUSH HIM!
UM... OKAY?
BACK.
NONE MAY THREATEN MY MASTER AND LIVE.

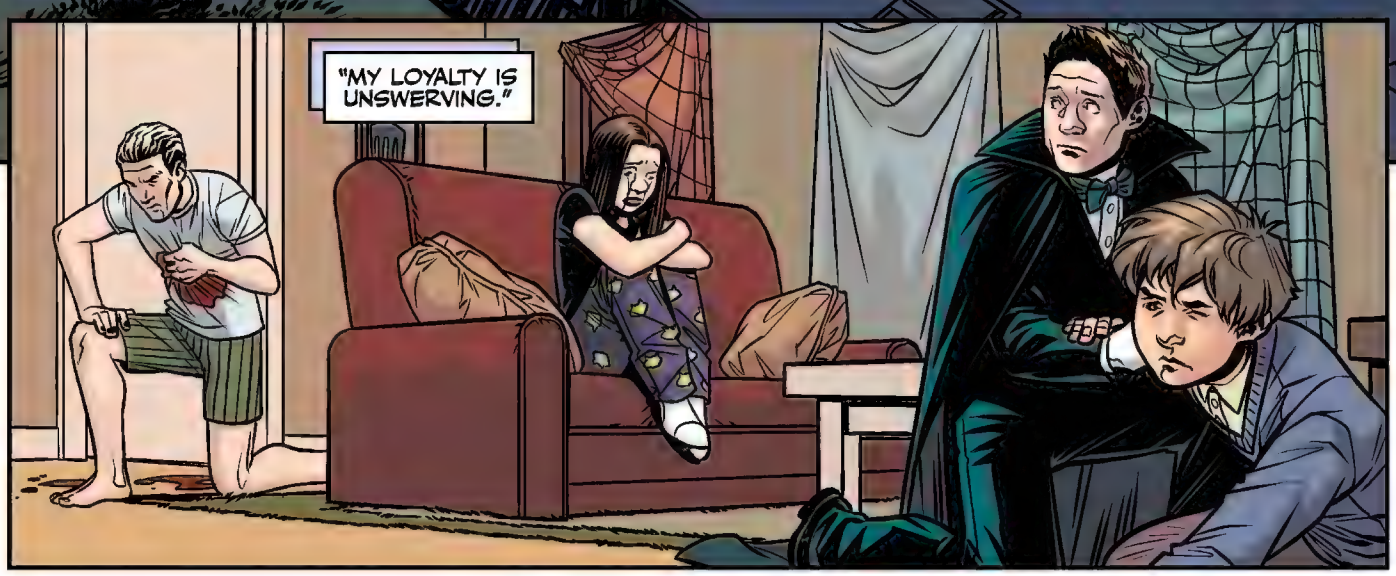

XANDER, SNAP OUT OF IT! HE'S CONTROLLING YOU!
MY MASTER IS GOOD AND KIND. AND HANDSOME AND ARTICULATE. AND LITHE...
HE'S AN ARROGANT JERK, AND I'M GOING TO KICK HIS BUTT.
THE ONLY WAY YOU'LL STOP ME IS TO FIGHT ME. HURT ME.
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
I... I...
GHAA!
HA!
MASTER!

I HAVE HIM, MASTER!
BLOODY HELL, HARRIS!
WELL DONE.
GHRR!
SHKK
SPIKE!
YOU SON OF A--
GHK!
PATHETIC.
DAWN...?


CALM YOURSELF, MANSERVANT. I WILL NOT PUNISH THEIR TRANSGRESSION. AS A SPECIAL FAVOR TO YOU.
MY LORD IS MERCIFUL.
COME. LET US BE AWAY.
YES, MASTER.
DAWN, STOP HIM! TELL HIM YOU LOVE HIM!
I...I...
XANDER, I LOVE YOU.

NO. YOU DON'T.

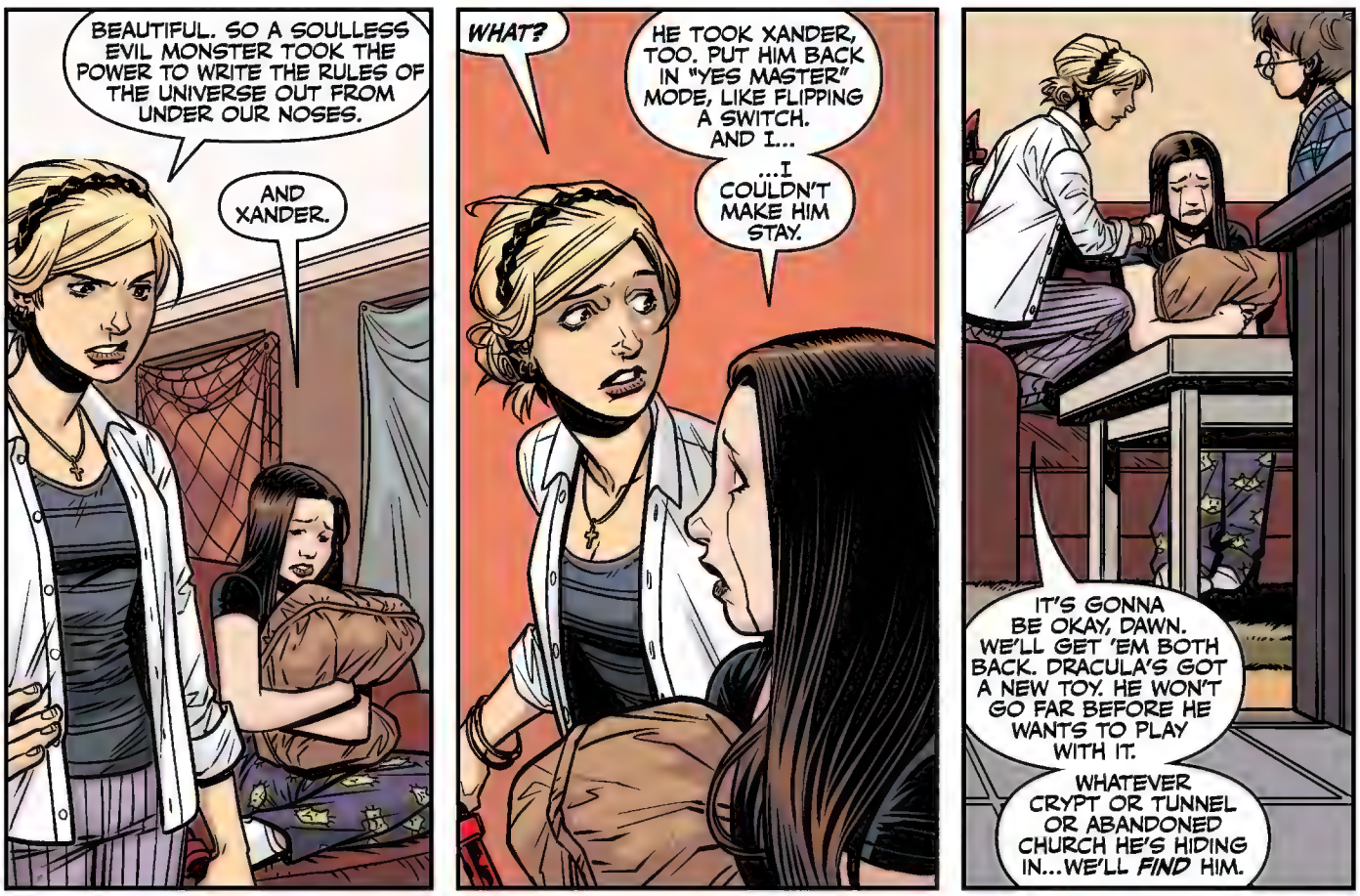
COME ALONG, MANSERVANT. I'LL CARRY YOU.
I AM HERE, MASTER.

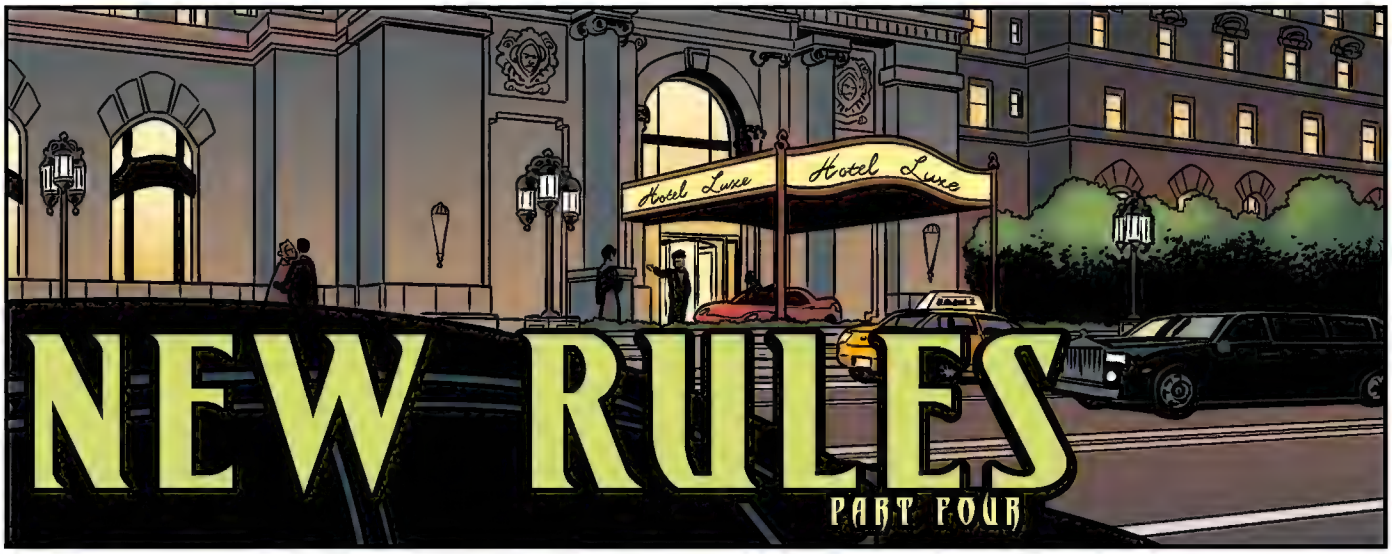

"MY LOYALTY IS UNSWERVING."

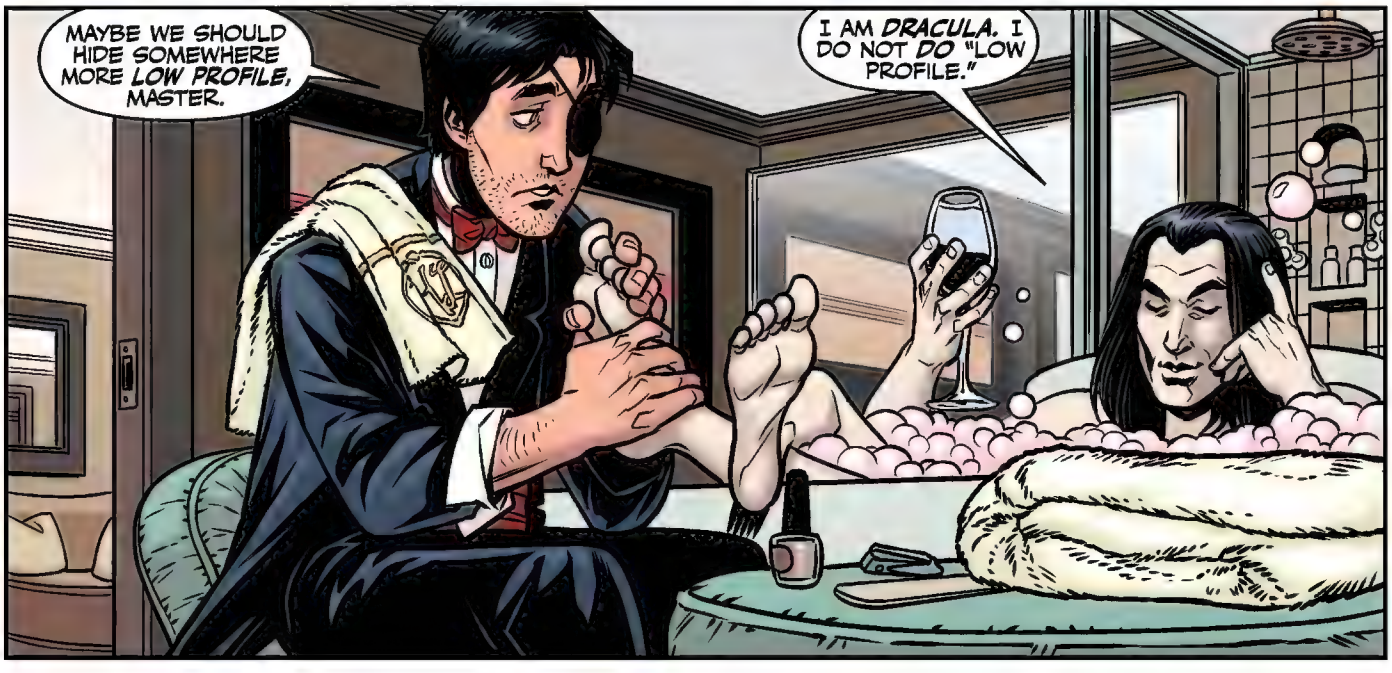
WELL, IT TOOK A WHILE, BUT WE GOT ONE--

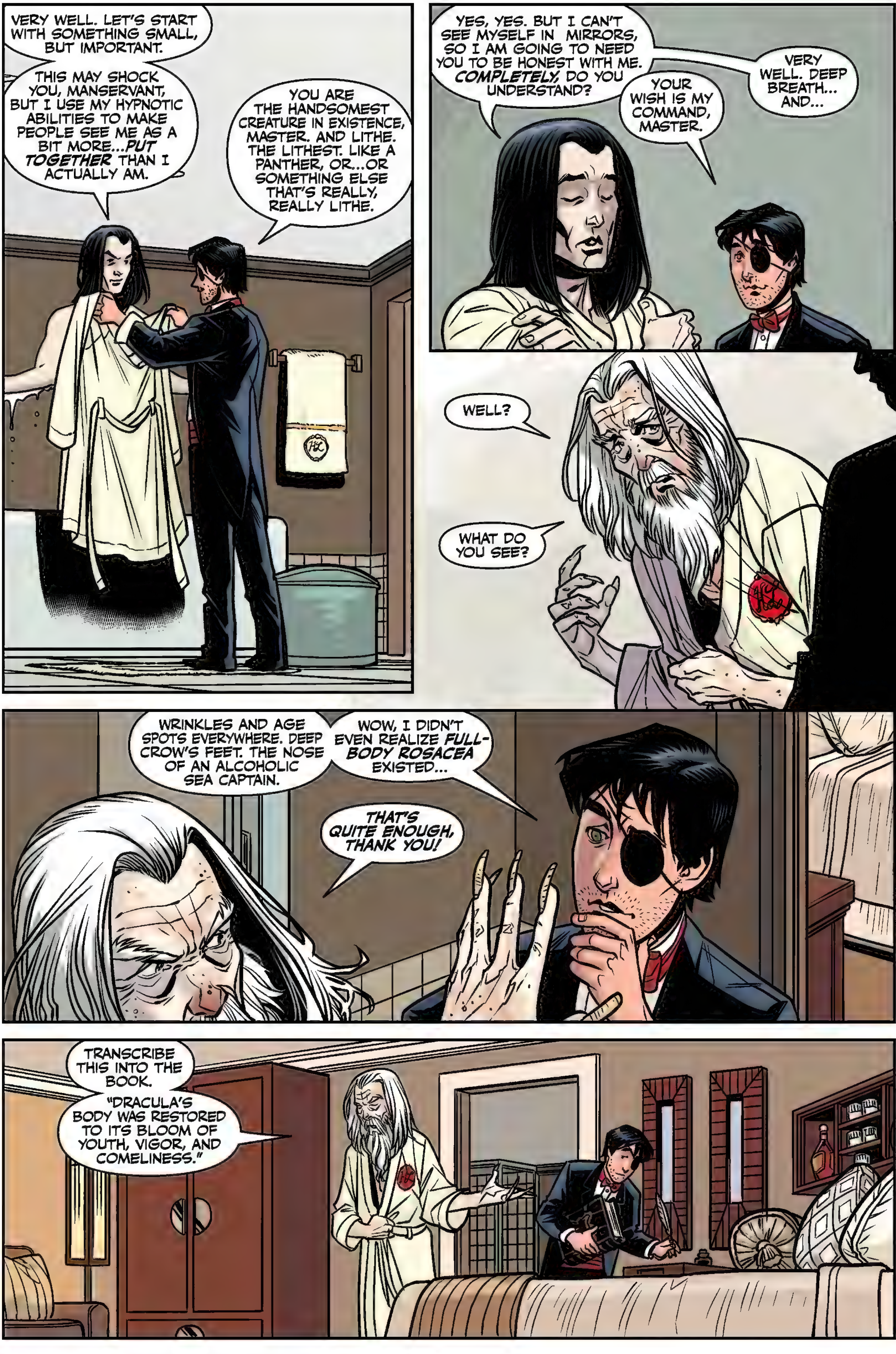
HOLY CRAP.
WHAT HAPPENED?

OH MY GOD, SPIKE!
RIGHT AS RAIN. ALREADY STARTING TO HEAL.
WHAT HAPPENED?
DRACULA. HE WENT ALL DARK WILLOW! STOLE THE VAMPYR BOOK.
"ALL DARK WILLOW"? I'M A TROPE NOW?
EMBRACE IT. I'D KILL TO BE A TROPE.
SO SENDING US TO CATCH A VAMPIRE WAS A SNIPE HUNT. WIL, MIGHT AS WELL TURN IT LOOSE. THE VAMP, I MEAN.
I FIGURED DRAC WOULD PULL SOMETHING LIKE THIS. JUST NOT SO SOON.
NEW VAMPIRES ARE STILL A THREAT TO HIM. AND WE WERE WORKING ON CHANGING THAT. I DON'T SEE HIS PLAY.
HSSS!
REMEMBER, THEY'RE HARDER TO STAKE.
I GOT IT.
PAFT
I SHOULD HAVE "SEEN HIS PLAY." BUT MY ATTENTION SPAN IS...NOT WHAT IT WAS.
DRACULA REASONED THAT, IF NEW RULES OF MAGIC ARE SPONTANEOUSLY WRITTEN IN THE BOOK, HE COULD SHAPE THE NEW RULES...BY WRITING THEM IN THE BOOK.
BUT HE'S WRONG, ISN'T HE? GILES, TELL ME HE'S WRONG...
I WISH I COULD.

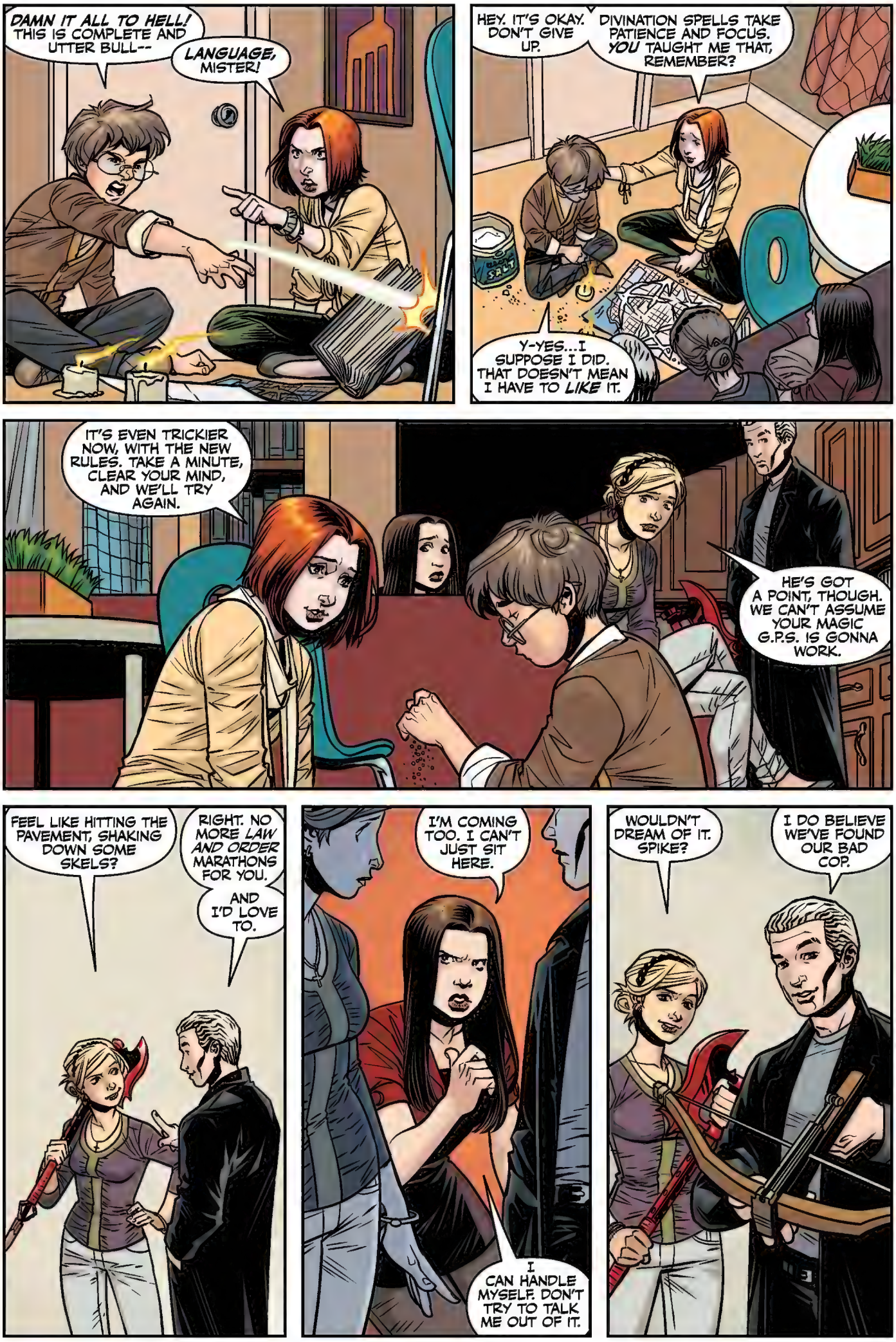

BEAUTIFUL. SO A SOULLESS EVIL MONSTER TOOK THE POWER TO WRITE THE RULES OF THE UNIVERSE OUT FROM UNDER OUR NOSES.
AND XANDER.
WHAT?
HE TOOK XANDER, TOO. PUT HIM BACK IN "YES MASTER" MODE, LIKE FLIPPING A SWITCH. AND I...
...I COULDN'T MAKE HIM STAY.
IT'S GONNA BE OKAY, DAWN. WE'LL GET 'EM BOTH BACK. DRACULA'S GOT A NEW TOY. HE WON'T GO FAR BEFORE HE WANTS TO PLAY WITH IT.
WHATEVER CRYPT OR TUNNEL OR ABANDONED CHURCH HE'S HIDING IN...WE'LL FIND HIM.

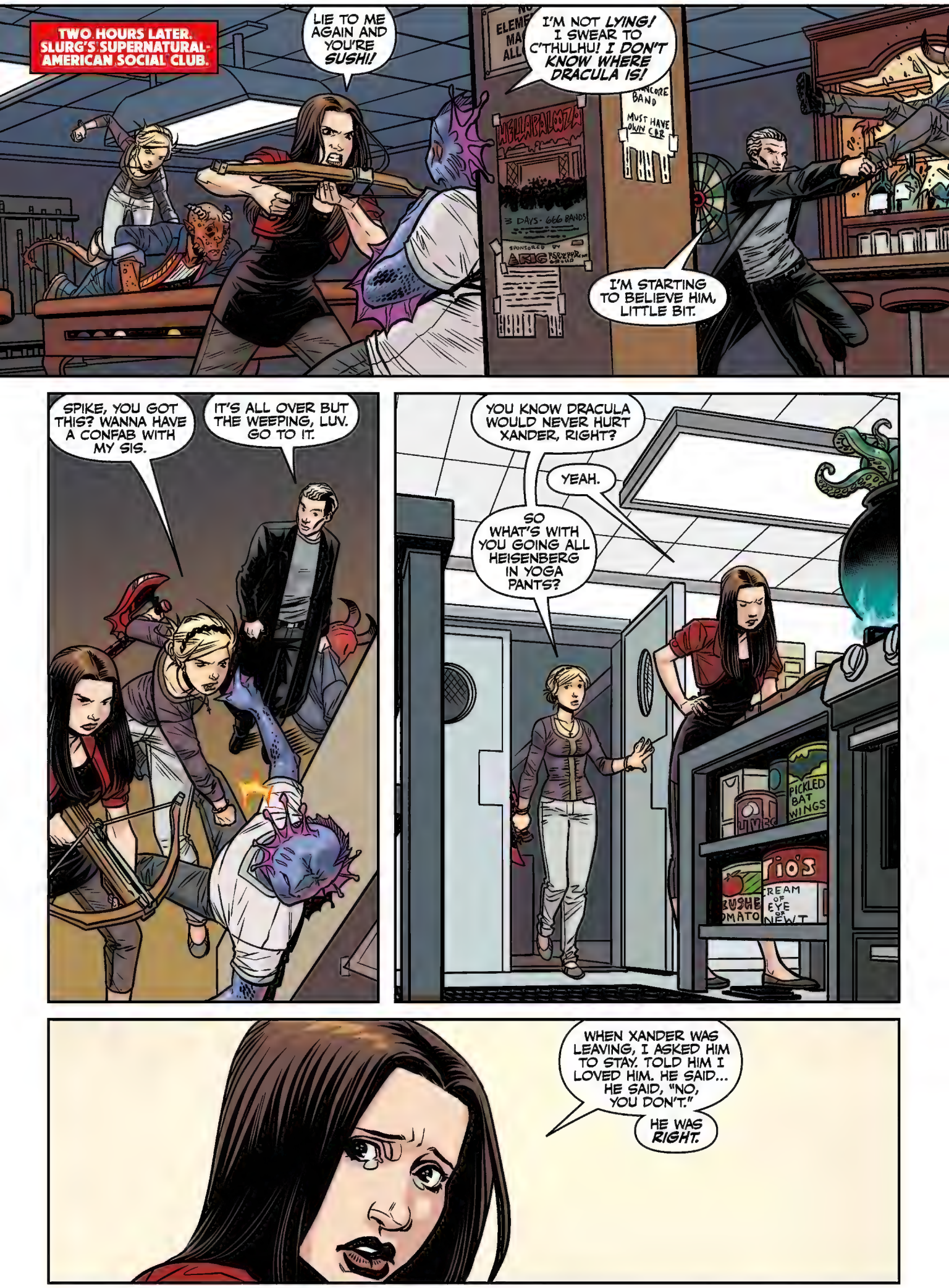

Hotel Luxe
Hotel Luxe
NEW RULES
PART FOUR

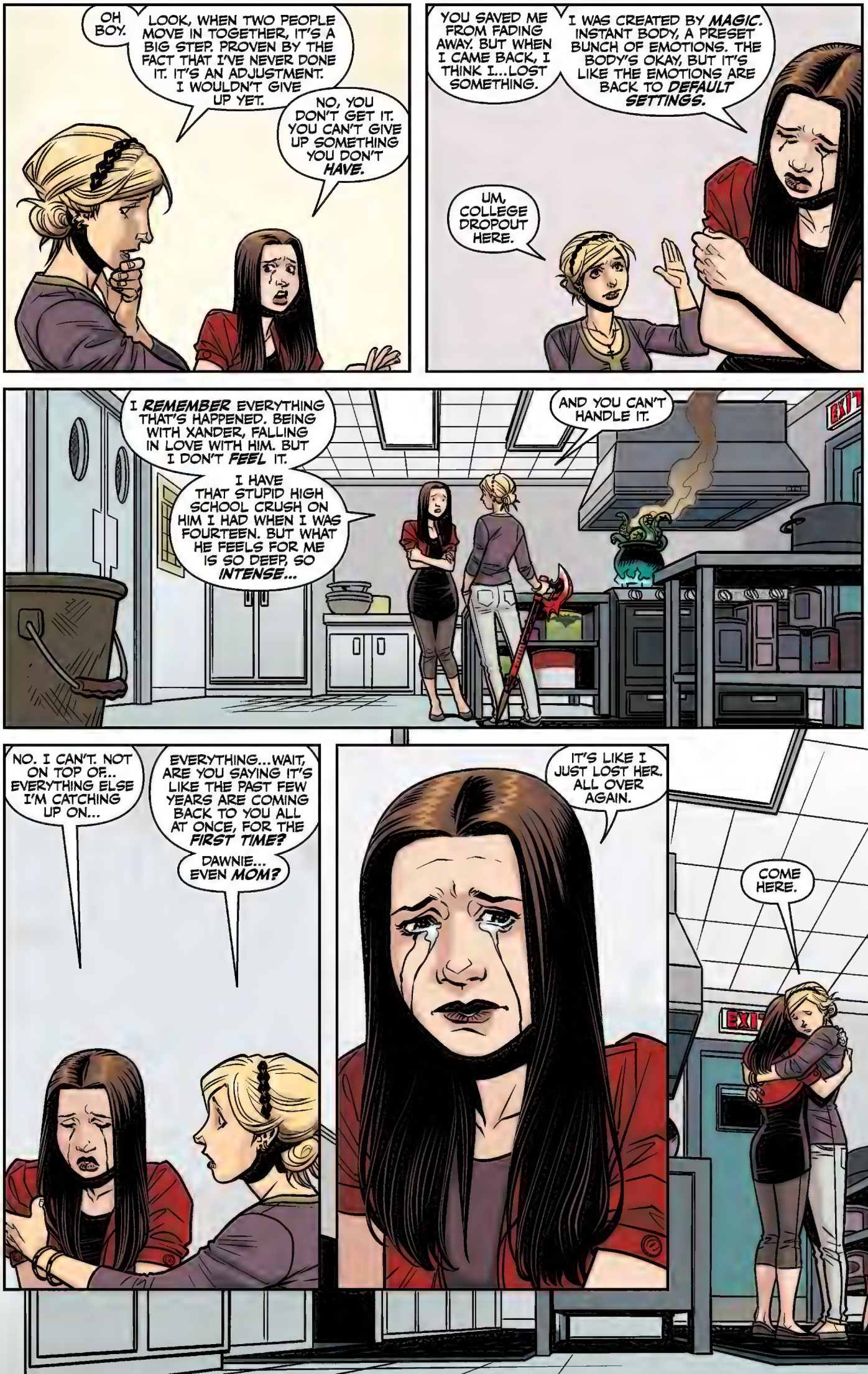

MAYBE WE SHOULD HIDE SOMEWHERE MORE LOW PROFILE, MASTER.
I AM DRACULA. I DO NOT DO "LOW PROFILE."

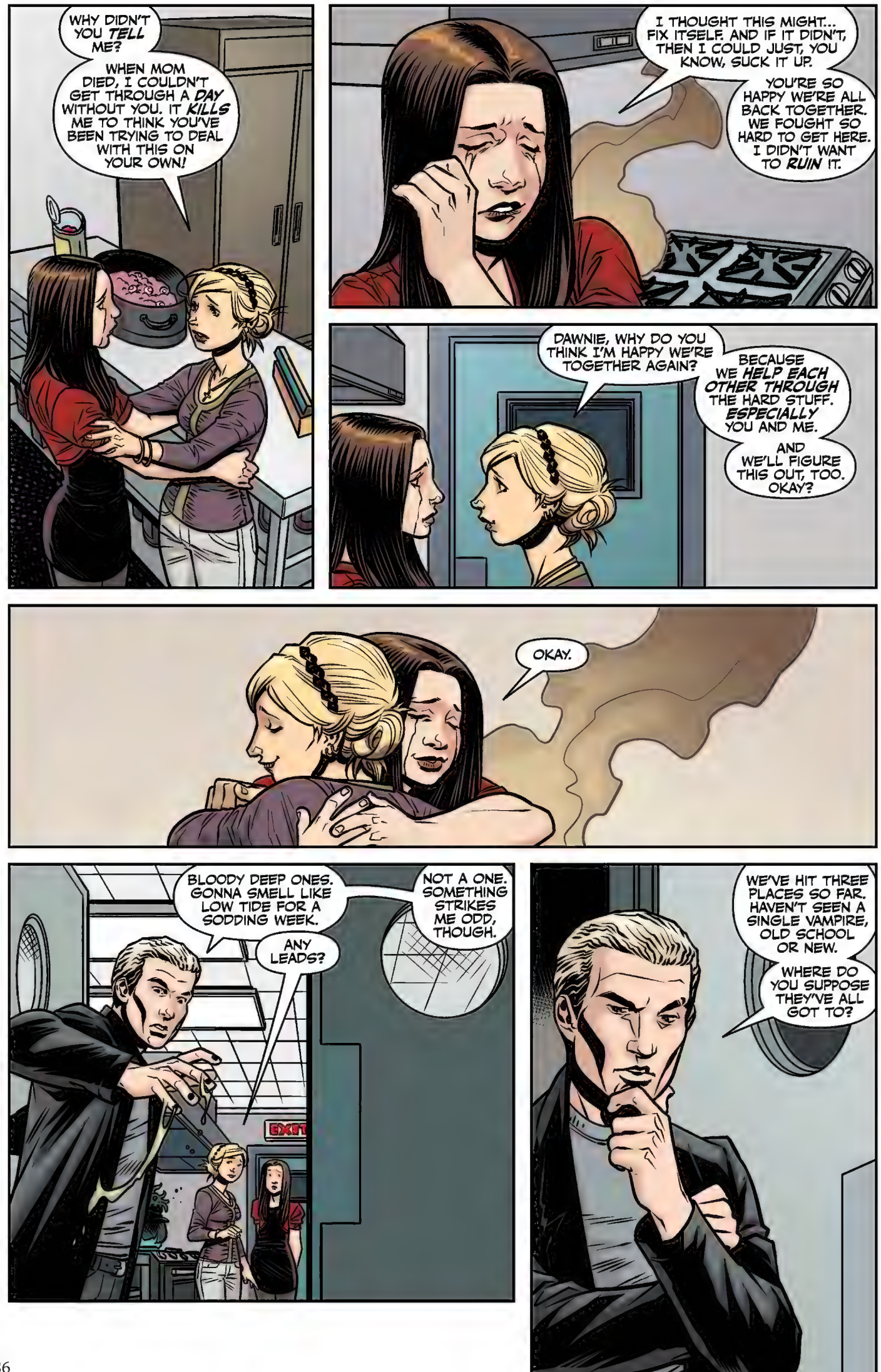

VERY WELL. LET'S START WITH SOMETHING SMALL, BUT IMPORTANT.
THIS MAY SHOCK YOU, MANSERVANT, BUT I USE MY HYPNOTIC ABILITIES TO MAKE PEOPLE SEE ME AS A BIT MORE...PUT TOGETHER THAN I ACTUALLY AM.
YOU ARE THE HANDSOMEST CREATURE IN EXISTENCE, MASTER. AND LITHE. THE LITHEST. LIKE A PANTHER, OR...OR SOMETHING ELSE THAT'S REALLY, REALLY LITHE.
YES, YES. BUT I CAN'T SEE MYSELF IN MIRRORS, SO I AM GOING TO NEED YOU TO BE HONEST WITH ME. COMPLETELY, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND, MASTER.
VERY WELL. DEEP BREATH... AND...
WELL?
WHAT DO YOU SEE?
WRINKLES AND AGE SPOTS EVERYWHERE. DEEP CROW'S FEET. THE NOSE OF AN ALCOHOLIC SEA CAPTAIN.
WOW, I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE FULL-BODY ROSACEA EXISTED...
THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH, THANK YOU!
TRANSCRIBE THIS INTO THE BOOK.
"DRACULA'S BODY WAS RESTORED TO ITS BLOOM OF YOUTH, VIGOR, AND COMELINESS."

WELL? HOW DO I LOOK?
YOUNG. HANDSOME. EVEN LITHER THAN BEFORE.
YOU'RE NOT JUST SAYING THAT?
NO, MASTER. YOU COMMANDED ME TO BE HONEST.
AND IN THAT SPIRIT, I SHOULD TELL YOU--YOU'RE PAYING WAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO HOW YOU LOOK ON THE OUTSIDE...
...AND NOT ENOUGH TO WHO DRACULA IS IN *HERE.*
YOU MAY RETURN TO BEING AN OBSEQUIOUS LICKSPITTLE NOW.
THANK YOU, MASTER.
IT WORKED. IT *WORKED!* THE POWER OF A GOD IS MINE!
NOW. LET'S THINK A BIT *BIGGER,* SHALL WE?
WRITE THIS DOWN-- "ALL BEINGS, ALIVE AND UNDEAD, NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL, RECOGNIZED DRACULA AS LORD OF ALL VAMPIRES..."


DAMN IT ALL TO HELL! THIS IS COMPLETE AND UTTER BULL--
LANGUAGE, MISTER!
HEY. IT'S OKAY. DON'T GIVE UP.
DIVINATION SPELLS TAKE PATIENCE AND FOCUS. YOU TAUGHT ME THAT, REMEMBER?
Y-YES...I SUPPOSE I DID. THAT DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE TO LIKE IT.
IT'S EVEN TRICKIER NOW, WITH THE NEW RULES. TAKE A MINUTE, CLEAR YOUR MIND, AND WE'LL TRY AGAIN.
HE'S GOT A POINT, THOUGH. WE CAN'T ASSUME YOUR MAGIC G.P.S. IS GONNA WORK.
FEEL LIKE HITTING THE PAVEMENT, SHAKING DOWN SOME SKELS?
RIGHT. NO MORE LAW AND ORDER MARATHONS FOR YOU.
AND I'D LOVE TO.
I'M COMING TOO. I CAN'T JUST SIT HERE.
I CAN HANDLE MYSELF. DON'T TRY TO TALK ME OUT OF IT.
WOULDN'T DREAM OF IT. SPIKE?
I DO BELIEVE WE'VE FOUND OUR BAD COP.

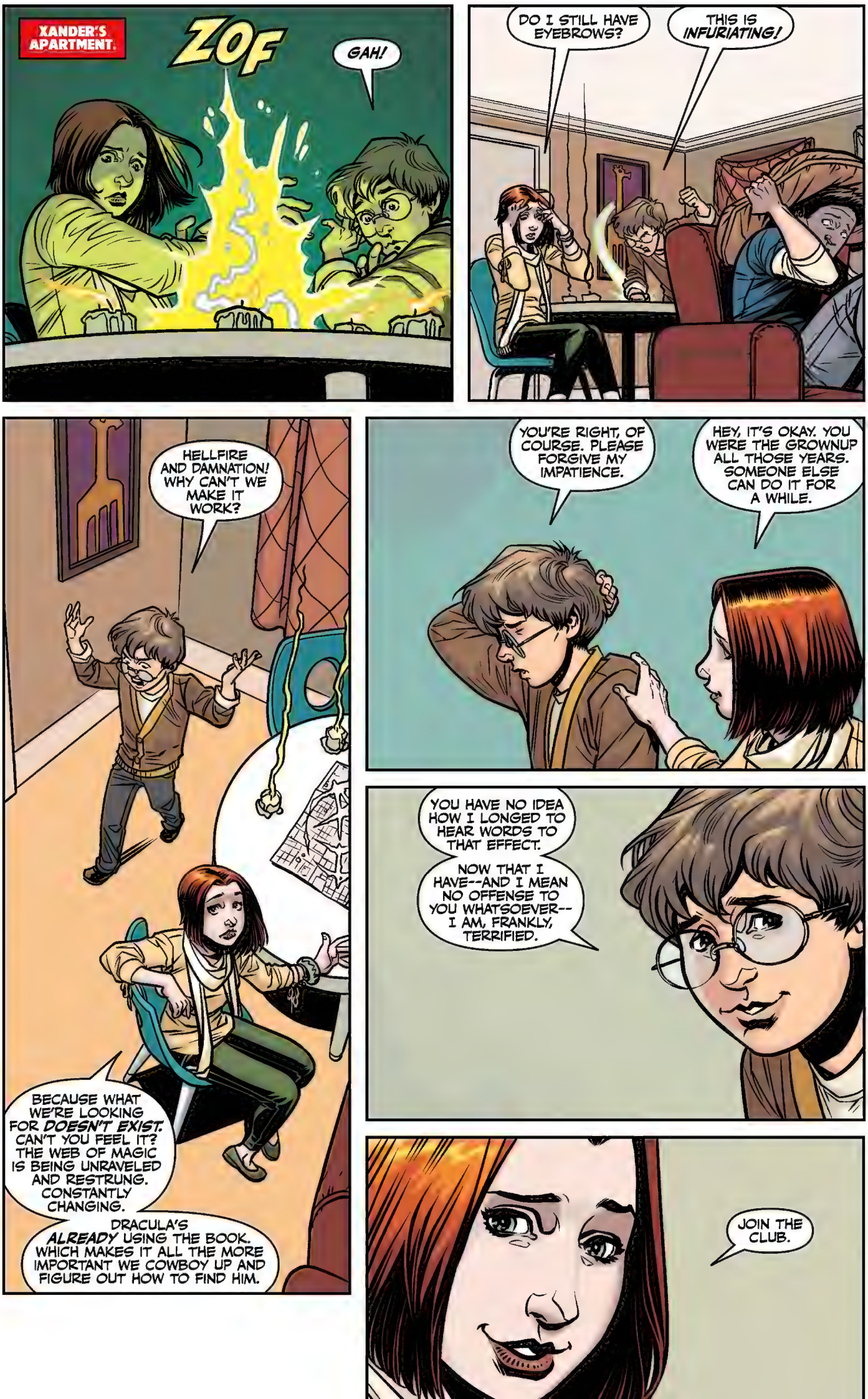

TWO HOURS LATER. SLURG'S SUPERNATURAL-AMERICAN SOCIAL CLUB.
LIE TO ME AGAIN AND YOU'RE SUSHI!
I'M NOT LYING! I SWEAR TO C'THULHU! I DON'T KNOW WHERE DRACULA IS!
I'M STARTING TO BELIEVE HIM, LITTLE BIT.
SPIKE, YOU GOT THIS? WANNA HAVE A CONFAB WITH MY SIS.
IT'S ALL OVER BUT THE WEEPING, LUV. GO TO IT.
YOU KNOW DRACULA WOULD NEVER HURT XANDER, RIGHT?
YEAH.
SO WHAT'S WITH YOU GOING ALL HEISENBERG IN YOGA PANTS?
PICKLED BAT WINGS
WHEN XANDER WAS LEAVING, I ASKED HIM TO STAY. TOLD HIM I LOVED HIM. HE SAID... HE SAID, "NO, YOU DON'T."
HE WAS RIGHT.


OH BOY.
LOOK, WHEN TWO PEOPLE MOVE IN TOGETHER, IT'S A BIG STEP. PROVEN BY THE FACT THAT I'VE NEVER DONE IT. IT'S AN ADJUSTMENT. I WOULDN'T GIVE UP YET.
NO, YOU DON'T GET IT. YOU CAN'T GIVE UP SOMETHING YOU DON'T HAVE.
YOU SAVED ME FROM FADING AWAY. BUT WHEN I CAME BACK, I THINK I...LOST SOMETHING.
I WAS CREATED BY MAGIC. INSTANT BODY, A PRESET BUNCH OF EMOTIONS. THE BODY'S OKAY, BUT IT'S LIKE THE EMOTIONS ARE BACK TO DEFAULT SETTINGS.
UM, COLLEGE DROPOUT HERE.
I REMEMBER EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED. BEING WITH XANDER, FALLING IN LOVE WITH HIM. BUT I DON'T FEEL IT.
I HAVE THAT STUPID HIGH SCHOOL CRUSH ON HIM I HAD WHEN I WAS FOURTEEN. BUT WHAT HE FEELS FOR ME IS SO DEEP, SO INTENSE...
AND YOU CAN'T HANDLE IT.
EXIT
NO. I CAN'T. NOT ON TOP OF... EVERYTHING ELSE I'M CATCHING UP ON...
EVERYTHING...WAIT, ARE YOU SAYING IT'S LIKE THE PAST FEW YEARS ARE COMING BACK TO YOU ALL AT ONCE, FOR THE FIRST TIME?
DAWNIE... EVEN MOM?
IT'S LIKE I JUST LOST HER. ALL OVER AGAIN.
COME HERE.
EXIT


WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?
WHEN MOM DIED, I COULDN'T GET THROUGH A DAY WITHOUT YOU. IT KILLS ME TO THINK YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO DEAL WITH THIS ON YOUR OWN!
I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT... FIX ITSELF. AND IF IT DIDN'T, THEN I COULD JUST, YOU KNOW, SUCK IT UP.
YOU'RE SO HAPPY WE'RE ALL BACK TOGETHER. WE FOUGHT SO HARD TO GET HERE. I DIDN'T WANT TO RUIN IT.
DAWNIE, WHY DO YOU THINK I'M HAPPY WE'RE TOGETHER AGAIN?
BECAUSE WE HELP EACH OTHER THROUGH THE HARD STUFF. ESPECIALLY YOU AND ME.
AND WE'LL FIGURE THIS OUT, TOO. OKAY?
OKAY.
BLOODY DEEP ONES. GONNA SMELL LIKE LOW TIDE FOR A SODDING WEEK.
ANY LEADS?
NOT A ONE. SOMETHING STRIKES ME ODD, THOUGH.
EXIT
WE'VE HIT THREE PLACES SO FAR. HAVEN'T SEEN A SINGLE VAMPIRE, OLD SCHOOL OR NEW.
WHERE DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY'VE ALL GOT TO?

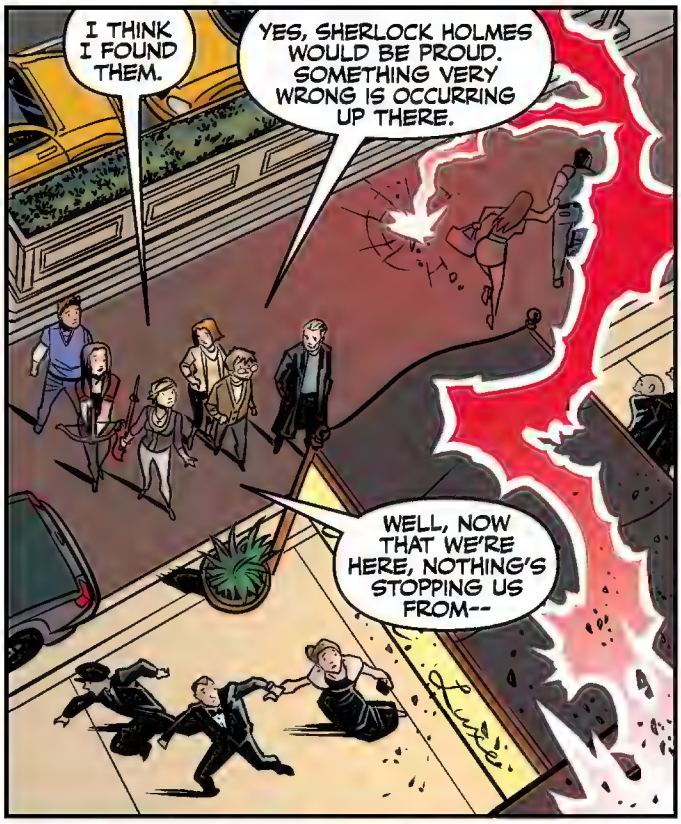
THE HOTEL LUXE
WE'VE COME TO PAY HOMAGE TO OUR MASTER.
YEAH, YEAH. THIS AIN'T A FLOPHOUSE. ONE MINUTE GROVEL TIME PER VAMPIRE. KISS THE HAND AND GET OUT.
303
PATIENCE, MANSERVANT. IT IS ROYALTY'S BURDEN TO ACCEPT THE OBEISANCE OF ITS INFERIORS, TIRESOME THOUGH IT MAY BE.
STILL, THIS HAS BEEN USEFUL. IT PROVES YOUR FRIENDS WERE THE SHORTSIGHTED COWARDS I ALWAYS SUSPECTED.
WHAT WE WROTE IN THE BOOK HAS COME TO PASS, EXACTLY AS INTENDED--
DIE!
HOW...
...RUDE!
PAFT

I'VE GOT HER, MASTER!
=NNF!= THIS USED TO BE EASIER. ANYONE HAVE A HAMMER?
YOU DARE? I AM YOUR ACKNOWLEDGED LORD! BY WHAT RIGHT DO YOU RAISE A HAND TO ME?
THE RIGHT OF CONQUEST.
HE WHO KILLS THE KING BECOMES THE KING.
PAFT
FEH. I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT.
OUT, ALL OF YOU! I CAN'T WORK WITH YOUR INCESSANT TOADYING.
MANSERVANT! FETCH THE BOOK. CLEARLY OUR PREVIOUS ENTRY WAS NOT DEFINITIVE ENOUGH.
WE MUST COME UP WITH SOMETHING CONCISE, YET MULTIFACETED. NOT A WORD WASTED. SOMETHING TRULY BRILLIANT.
VAMPYR
I'VE GOT IT!
I'LL BUFF YOUR TOENAILS. NOTHING HELPS THE CREATIVE PROCESS LIKE SHINY TOENAILS. THEN THIS'LL BE A CAKEWALK.

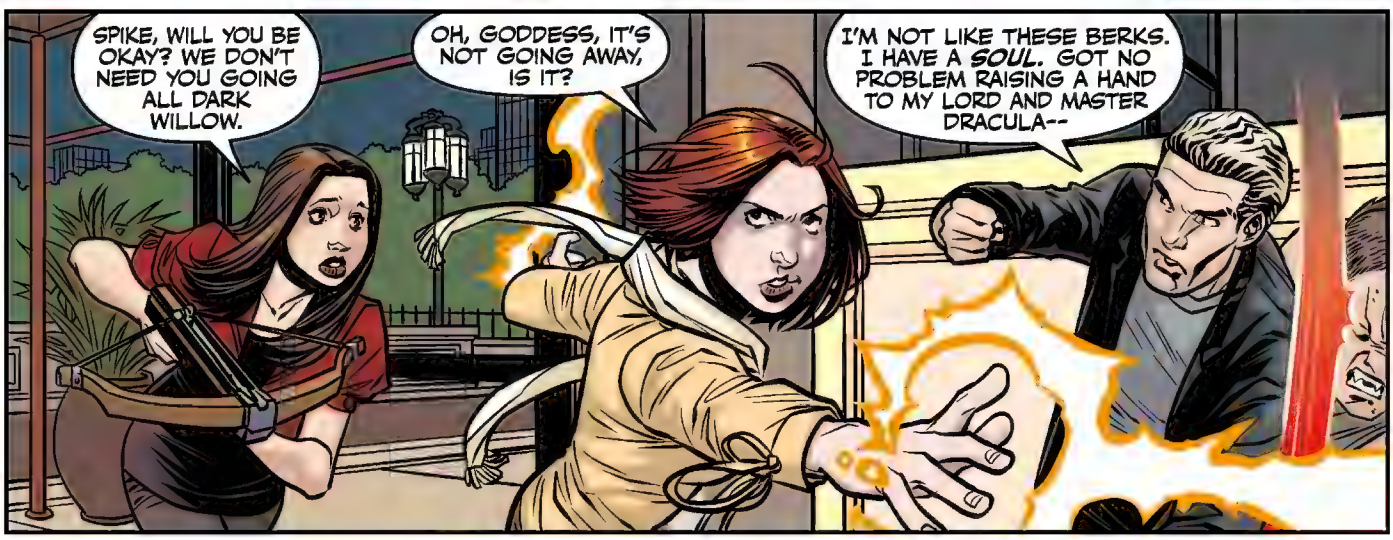

XANDER'S APARTMENT
ZOF
GAH!
DO I STILL HAVE EYEBROWS?
THIS IS INFURIATING!
HELLFIRE AND DAMNATION! WHY CAN'T WE MAKE IT WORK?
BECAUSE WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR DOESN'T EXIST. CAN'T YOU FEEL IT? THE WEB OF MAGIC IS BEING UNRAVELED AND RESTRUNG. CONSTANTLY CHANGING.
DRACULA'S ALREADY USING THE BOOK. WHICH MAKES IT ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT WE COWBOY UP AND FIGURE OUT HOW TO FIND HIM.
YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE. PLEASE FORGIVE MY IMPATIENCE.
HEY, IT'S OKAY. YOU WERE THE GROWNUP ALL THOSE YEARS. SOMEONE ELSE CAN DO IT FOR A WHILE.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW I LONGED TO HEAR WORDS TO THAT EFFECT.
NOW THAT I HAVE--AND I MEAN NO OFFENSE TO YOU WHATSOEVER-- I AM, FRANKLY, TERRIFIED.
JOIN THE CLUB.

NO LUCK. THE ONLY THING WE FOUND OUT IS THAT THERE AREN'T ANY VAMPIRES AROUND.
FIGURE THEY KNOW SOMETHING WE DON'T. BUT WE CAN'T LEARN WHAT TILL WE FIND 'EM. BIT OF A CATCH-22 THERE.
UM, NOT TO BE CAPTAIN OBVIOUS, BUT AREN'T *YOU* A VAMPIRE?
BUT CLEARLY I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, OR I'D BLOODY SAY SO, WOULDN'T I?
UNLESS YOU DON'T *KNOW* WHAT YOU KNOW.
RIGHT. I NEED A DRINK.
WORK WITH ME HERE. VAMPIRES HAVE A KIND OF SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR SIRES, RIGHT? WELL, ISN'T DRACULA, LIKE, BIG DADDY MASTER OF ALL VAMPIRES, IN A WAY?
LISTEN UP, SUNSHINE. NO ONE'S MY MASTER. NO ONE.
EXCEPT, OF COURSE, FOR THE LORD OF ALL VAMPIRES, DRACULA.
OH, BLOODY HELL. THE PONCE HAS BEEN MESSING ABOUT WITH THE BOOK, HASN'T HE?
LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE--WE'VE GOT A LEAD. YOU WANT ME TO HAVE DAWN ROUGH YOU UP A LITTLE...
...OR ARE YOU GONNA TAKE US TO YOUR LEADER?

I DON'T SEE WHY THIS MUST BE SO COMPLICATED.
THE HOTEL LUXE.
SIMPLY WRITE THAT ALL WHO ACCOST ME ARE STRUCK DEAD ON THE SPOT.
DEFINE "ACCOST." YOU WANT PANHANDLERS AND JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES DROPPING LIKE FLIES ALL AROUND YOU?
OF COURSE.
WHAT ABOUT SOMEONE WHO TRIES TO, Y'KNOW, GET FRISKY? THAT COULD TECHNICALLY BE ACCOSTING.
HMM. A VALID POINT. WELL, WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?
I SAY KEEP IT SHORT, SIMPLE, AND TO THE POINT. YOU CAN'T STOP PEOPLE MESSING WITH YOU, SO MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T MATTER.
"DRACULA BECAME THE MOST POWERFUL VAMPIRE OF ALL." BOOM.
HMM. I LIKE IT. WRITE IT DOWN.
DONE.
I DON'T FEEL ANY DIFFERENT.
MAYBE IT'S A WIZARD OF OZ THING. YOU WERE ALREADY THE MOST POWERFUL VAMPIRE. WHAT YOU WISHED FOR WAS IN YOU ALL ALONG.
EAAAAUUUH!
OR MAYBE I'M AN IDIOT.

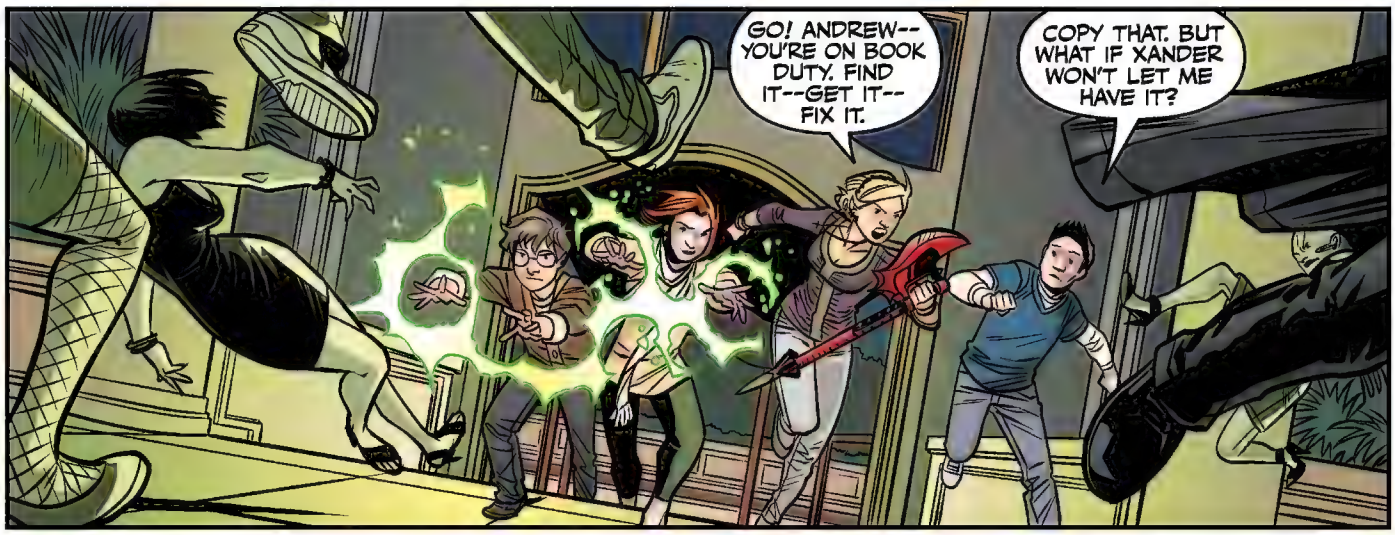

I THINK I FOUND THEM.
YES, SHERLOCK HOLMES WOULD BE PROUD. SOMETHING VERY WRONG IS OCCURRING UP THERE.
WELL, NOW THAT WE'RE HERE, NOTHING'S STOPPING US FROM--

PROTECT THE MASTER!
ANNOYING.


SPIKE, WILL YOU BE OKAY? WE DON'T NEED YOU GOING ALL DARK WILLOW.
OH, GODDESS, IT'S NOT GOING AWAY, IS IT?
I'M NOT LIKE THESE BERKS. I HAVE A SOUL. GOT NO PROBLEM RAISING A HAND TO MY LORD AND MASTER DRACULA--

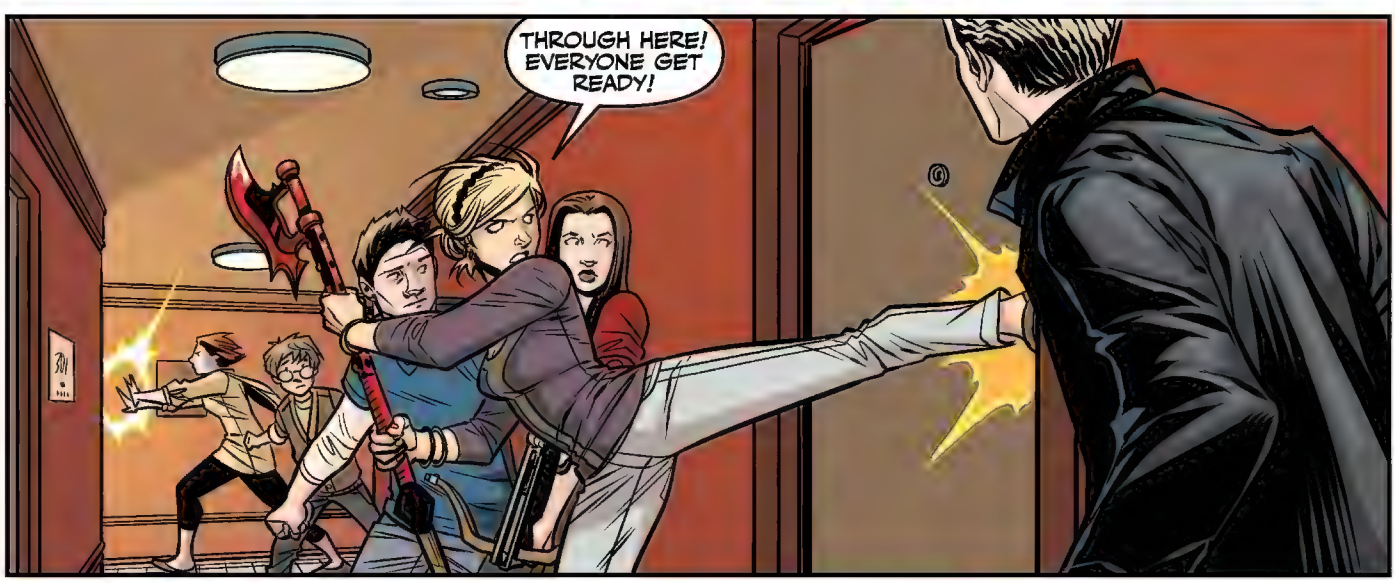
I'LL BE BLOODY FINE!
WE NEED TO MAKE A PATH TO THE STAIRS.
I SUGGEST A SPELL OF CLEAVAGE--

CLEAVING. I MEANT CLEAVING.
HORMONES ARE FINE UNTIL THEY GET YOU KILLED. DO IT!


GO! ANDREW--YOU'RE ON BOOK DUTY. FIND IT--GET IT--FIX IT.
COPY THAT. BUT WHAT IF XANDER WON'T LET ME HAVE IT?

DON'T GET VIOLENT. AND DON'T LIE. JUST TALK TO HIM, HONESTLY.
THAT'S HOW HE GOT THROUGH TO ME WHEN I WENT ALL DARK--

CRAP.


THROUGH HERE! EVERYONE GET READY!

OH, MAN.
THIS IS BAD, ISN'T IT?

CROSS IT OUT! CROSS IT OUT!
I'M TRYING! IT WON'T STAY CROSSED OUT!
GHAAAGHH!!
THEN RUN, YOU FOOLS!

PLEASE! YOU HAVE TO HELP MY MASTER! HE'S TURNING INTO THE HULK!
WHICH WOULD BE AWESOME IF IT WAS THE SMART HULK, BUT IT'S CLEARLY THE SAVAGE HULK!

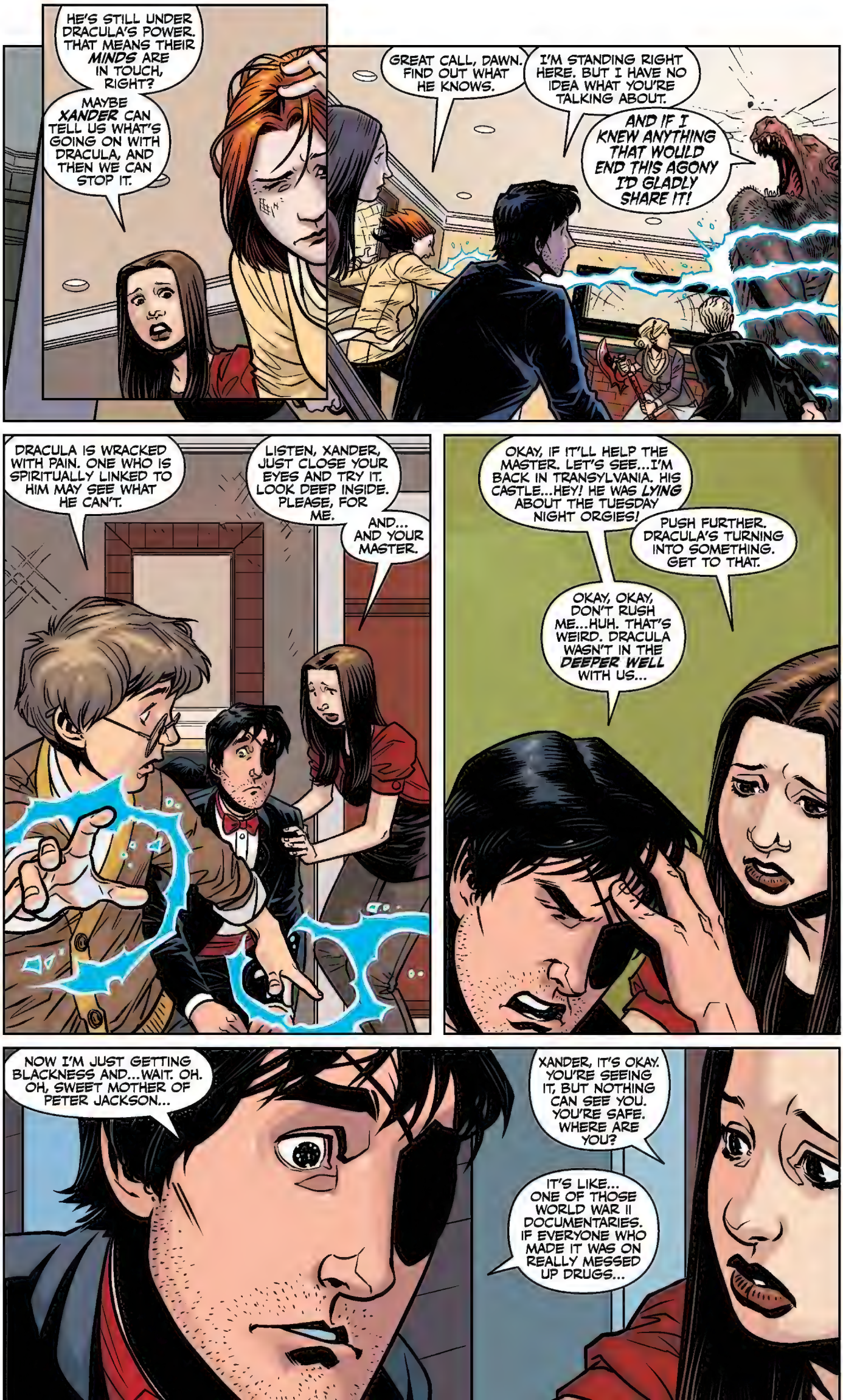
THAT'S NO HULK. IT LOOKS MORE LIKE DEMON. BUT I KNOW A LOT ABOUT DEMONS, AND I CAN'T IDENTIFY IT.
THIS SHOULDN'T BE HAPPENING! I DISTINCTLY DID NOT WRITE ANYTHING ABOUT DEMONS! THIS IS NOT WHAT WE HAD IN MIND AT ALL!

MONKEY'S PAW.

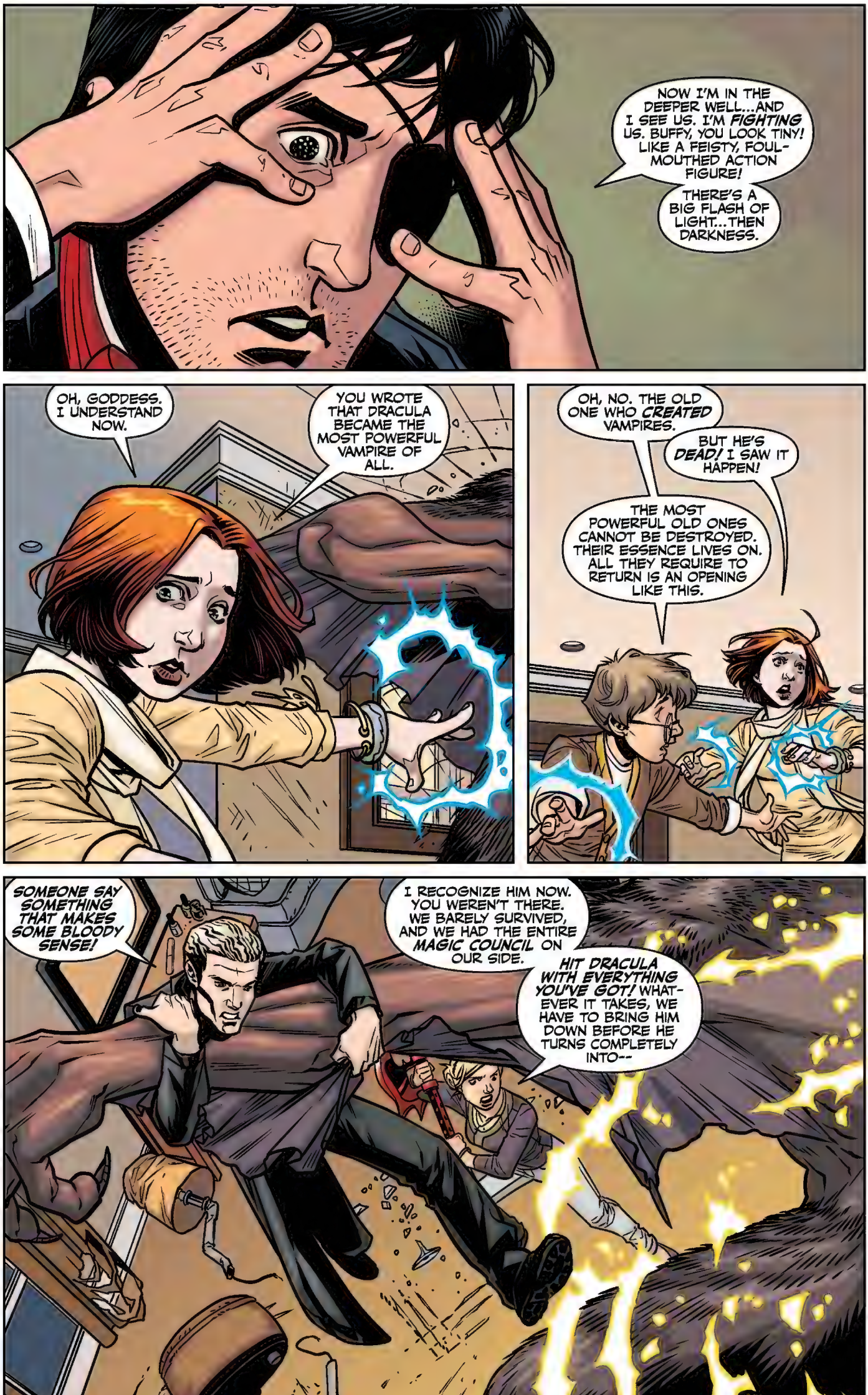
THE CLASSIC CATCH-22 OF WISH FULFILLMENT. YOU GET WHAT YOU ASKED FOR, BUT IN A HORRIBLY TWISTED WAY. WHAT DID YOU WRITE?
JUST THAT HE BECAME THE MOST POWERFUL VAMPIRE OF ALL.
OH, NO YOU DIDN'T.

I THOUGHT IT WAS SIMPLE AND STRAIGHT-FORWARD!
WITH ENOUGH ROOM FOR INTERPRETATION TO DRIVE A TRUCK THROUGH, YES. BRILLIANT. A REVERSAL SPELL ISN'T WORKING. WILLOW?
NO GOOD. IT'S LIKE HOLDING BACK A HURRICANE--
GUH!
HRRAAARR!
WILLOW!
SPIKE, HELP ME HOLD HIM DOWN!
HE'S TOO STRONG. WE MIGHT HAVE TO KILL MY LORD AND MASTER DRACULA. A THOUGHT I LIKE BETTER EVERY TIME I HAVE TO SAY THAT.
YEAH, WELL, CONSIDERING I'VE STAKED HIM BEFORE AND HE COMES RIGHT BACK, I'M NOT SURE THAT'S EVEN POSSIBLE. ANDREW, I HOPE YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING UP YOUR SLEEVE!
LET'S START WITH THE OBVIOUS. "SUDDENLY DRACULA'S TRANSFORMATION WAS UNDONE."
SPLAT
THE BOOK DOESN'T LIKE RETCONS.

WAIT, I'VE GOT IT! THE NEWHART GAMBIT. "THEN DRACULA WOKE UP. IT HAD ALL BEEN A DREAM."
SPLATT
THE BOOK REALLY DOESN'T LIKE CLICHÉS.
ANDREW! DO YOU PLAN TO ACTUALLY DO ANYTHING?
I'M TRYING! IT'S REALLY HARD TO WRITE UNDER THIS KIND OF PRESSURE!
TELL ME ABOUT IT. AND EVERYONE THINKS THEY CAN DO BETTER, BUT DO THEY? NO.
XANDER...YOU WERE RIGHT. I'M SORRY.
FOR WHAT?
FOR...FOR NOT LOVING YOU.
IT'S OKAY. MY MASTER LOVES ME.
THAT'S ALL I NEED.


HE'S STILL UNDER DRACULA'S POWER. THAT MEANS THEIR MINDS ARE IN TOUCH, RIGHT?
MAYBE XANDER CAN TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON WITH DRACULA, AND THEN WE CAN STOP IT.
GREAT CALL, DAWN. FIND OUT WHAT HE KNOWS.
I'M STANDING RIGHT HERE. BUT I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
AND IF I KNEW ANYTHING THAT WOULD END THIS AGONY I'D GLADLY SHARE IT!
DRACULA IS WRACKED WITH PAIN. ONE WHO IS SPIRITUALLY LINKED TO HIM MAY SEE WHAT HE CAN'T.
LISTEN, XANDER, JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TRY IT. LOOK DEEP INSIDE. PLEASE, FOR ME.
AND... AND YOUR MASTER.
OKAY, IF IT'LL HELP THE MASTER. LET'S SEE...I'M BACK IN TRANSYLVANIA. HIS CASTLE...HEY! HE WAS LYING ABOUT THE TUESDAY NIGHT ORGIES!
PUSH FURTHER. DRACULA'S TURNING INTO SOMETHING. GET TO THAT.
OKAY, OKAY, DON'T RUSH ME...HUH. THAT'S WEIRD. DRACULA WASN'T IN THE DEEPER WELL WITH US...
NOW I'M JUST GETTING BLACKNESS AND...WAIT. OH. OH, SWEET MOTHER OF PETER JACKSON...
XANDER, IT'S OKAY. YOU'RE SEEING IT, BUT NOTHING CAN SEE YOU. YOU'RE SAFE. WHERE ARE YOU?
IT'S LIKE... ONE OF THOSE WORLD WAR II DOCUMENTARIES. IF EVERYONE WHO MADE IT WAS ON REALLY MESSED UP DRUGS...

"IT LOOKS...PREHISTORIC. BUT NOT LIKE ANYTHING YOU SEE AT THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.
"THERE ARE THESE MASSIVE... *THINGS.* MONSTERS. STUFF OUT OF STAN WINSTON'S NIGHTMARES. ALL FIGHTING EACH OTHER, WHILE TERRIFIED CAVE PEOPLE WORSHIP THEM.
"NOW SOME OF THE CAVEMEN ARE GETTING TOGETHER. USING MAGIC TO TAKE THEM DOWN. LOCK THEM UP IN THE DEEPER WELL.
"I'M ONE OF THESE MONSTERS. AND I'M ON THE RUN. I NEED AN ARMY TO FIGHT THEM WITH.
"SO I'M GOING TO *MAKE* ONE."


NOW I'M IN THE DEEPER WELL...AND I SEE US. I'M *FIGHTING* US. BUFFY, YOU LOOK TINY! LIKE A FEISTY, FOUL-MOUTHED ACTION FIGURE!
THERE'S A BIG FLASH OF LIGHT...THEN DARKNESS.
OH, GODDESS. I UNDERSTAND NOW.
YOU WROTE THAT DRACULA BECAME THE MOST POWERFUL VAMPIRE OF ALL.
OH, NO. THE OLD ONE WHO *CREATED* VAMPIRES.
BUT HE'S *DEAD!* I SAW IT HAPPEN!
THE MOST POWERFUL OLD ONES CANNOT BE DESTROYED. THEIR ESSENCE LIVES ON. ALL THEY REQUIRE TO RETURN IS AN OPENING LIKE THIS.
SOMEONE SAY SOMETHING THAT MAKES SOME BLOODY SENSE!
I RECOGNIZE HIM NOW. YOU WEREN'T THERE. WE BARELY SURVIVED, AND WE HAD THE ENTIRE *MAGIC COUNCIL* ON OUR SIDE.
HIT DRACULA WITH EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT! WHATEVER IT TAKES, WE HAVE TO BRING HIM DOWN BEFORE HE TURNS COMPLETELY INTO--

TOO LATE, WORMS.
HNGH!
WHRAKT
MALOKER HAS RETURNED.
AND I HUNGER.
MASTER...?

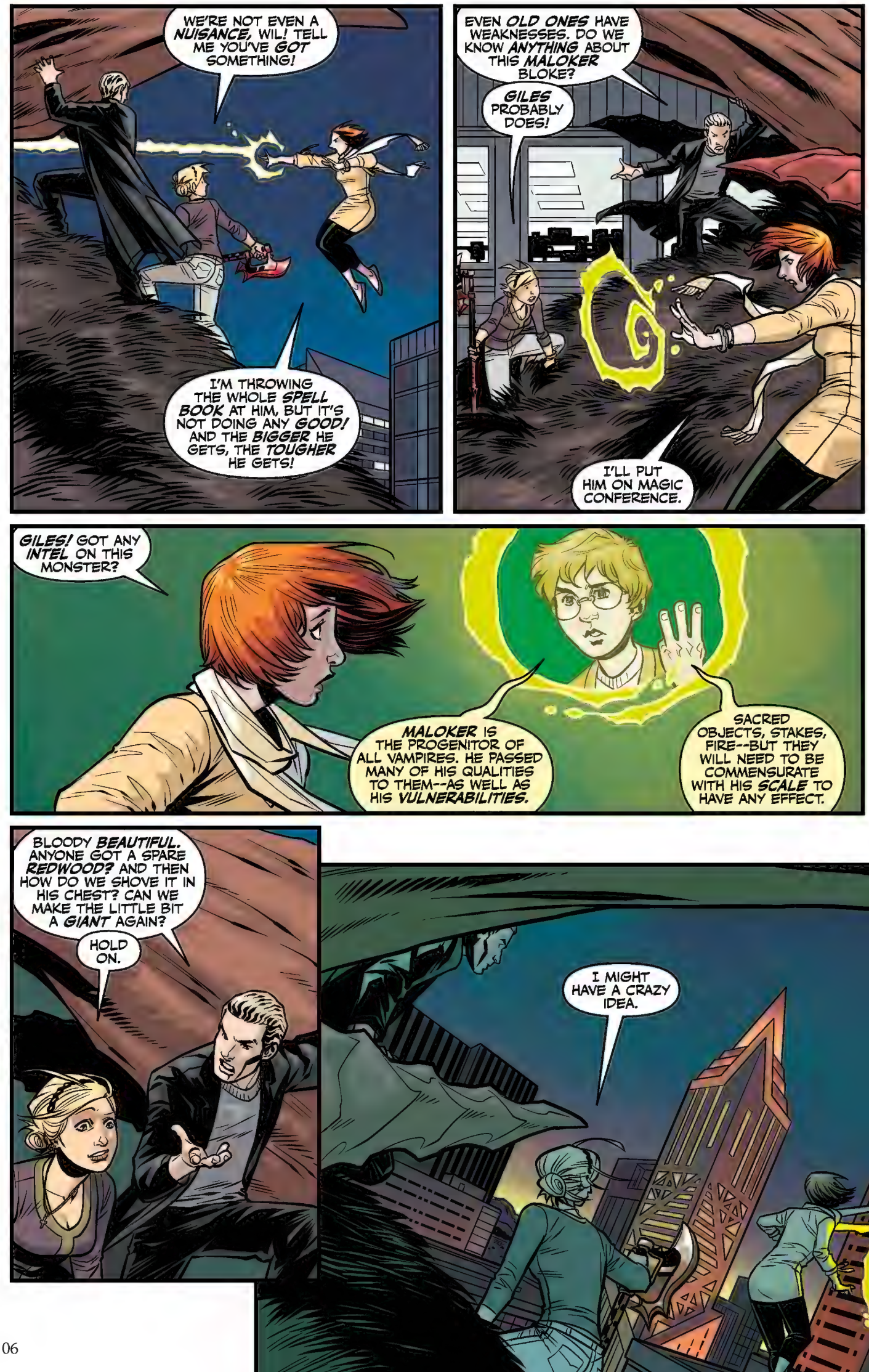
Y'KNOW, I WAS THERE WHEN WE FOUGHT MALOKER IN THE DEEPER WELL.

I DON'T REMEMBER HIM BEING THIS BIG.
GROAAARR

NEW RULES
PART FIVE

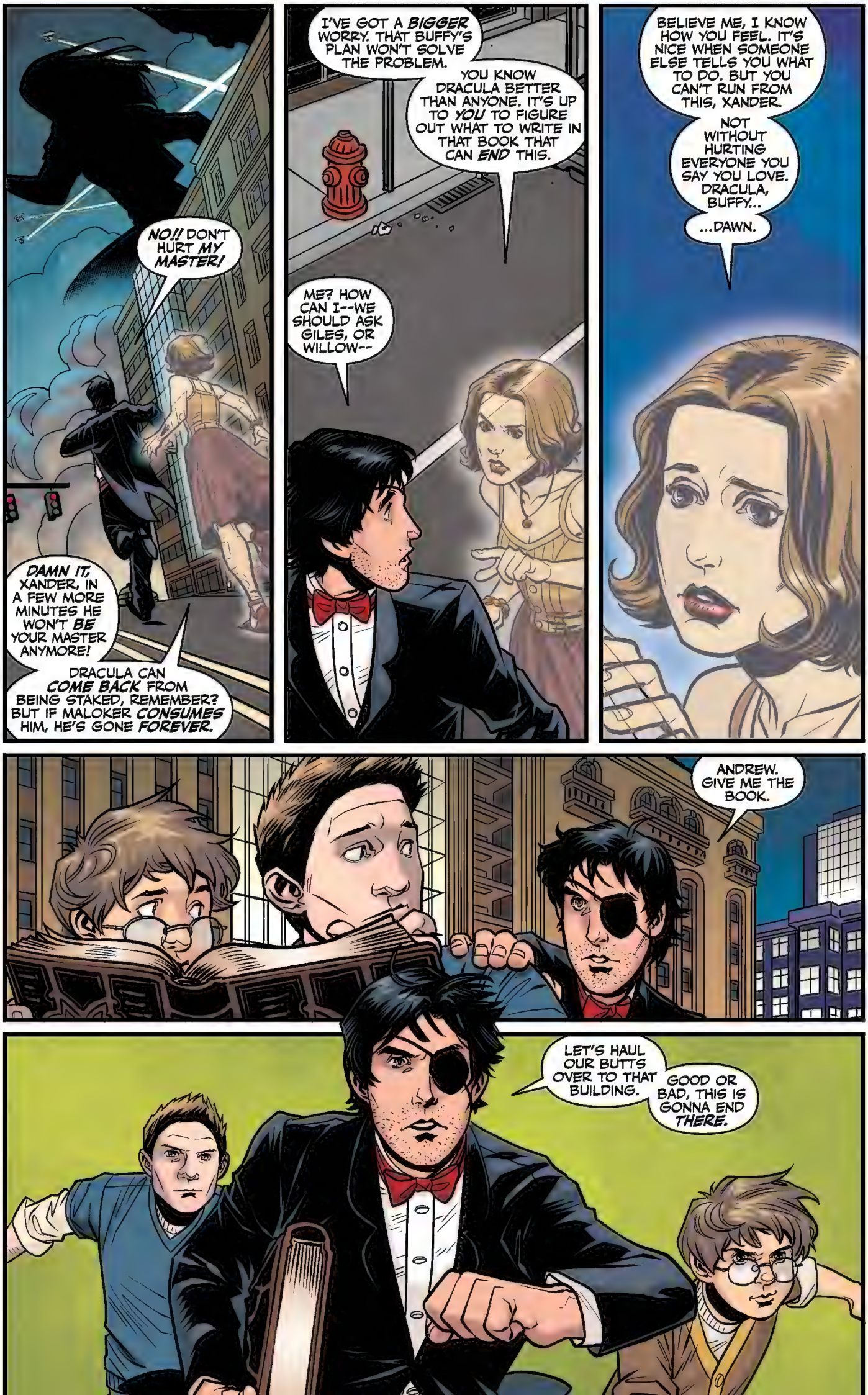
MALOKER IS AN OLD ONE. HE IS AS LARGE AS HE WISHES TO BE. THE DEEPER WELL WAS A CONFINED SPACE--I'D IMAGINE HE CHOSE AN APPROPRIATE SCALE.
THERE ARE NO SUCH RESTRICTIONS HERE. AND AS DRACULA IS STILL IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMING INTO MALOKER, HE WILL HAVE MUCH LESS CONTROL OVER HIS FORM.
HURRY! WE MUST GET OUT BEFORE THE ENTIRE BUILDING COMES DOWN!
FIRE EXIT
I HAVE TO HELP MY MASTER! THAT LOOKS PAINFUL!
YOU CAN'T HELP HIM IF YOU'RE SMUSHED! NOW COME ON!
ANDREW! IT IS IMPERATIVE WE WRITE SOMETHING IN THE BOOK THAT WILL REVERSE THE TRANSFORMATION! I INVITE ANY SUGGESTIONS SUPERIOR TO YOUR LAST FEW ATTEMPTS.
NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT DOES NOT HELP MY CREATIVITY!
Hotel Luxe
XANDER! YOU LOOK MARGINALLY LESS LIKE A DROOLING IDIOT THAN YOU DID FIVE MINUTES AGO. CAN YOU HEAR ME YET?
HUH?
OH! GHOST ANYA. I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE. WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?
HERE! TRYING TO TALK YOU OUT OF DOING SOMETHING STUPID, LIKE, OH, I DON'T KNOW, TURNING DRACULA INTO A GIGANTIC, AWESOMELY POWERFUL ELDER GOD!
BUT SOMEONE WAS TOO SMITTEN WITH HIS "MASTER" TO PAY ATTENTION! AND DON'T CALL ME "GHOST ANYA." DO I CALL YOU "CORPOREAL XANDER"?

GO AWAY! WHY ARE YOU YELLING AT ME?!
BECAUSE DRACULA'S PERSONA IS BEING OVERWRITTEN BY MALOKER'S. HIS CONTROL OVER YOU IS STARTING TO FADE. SO YOU CAN SEE ME AGAIN!
AND I'M YELLING BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T STOP THIS, NOT ONLY IS YOUR PRECIOUS "MASTER" GOING TO DIE--
--SO ARE YOU, ALL YOUR FRIENDS--
--AND MOST OF THE WEST COAST! JUST FOR STARTERS.
THIS WORLD HAS CHANGED. FEWER OLD ONES.
MORE FOOD.
I APPROVE.


WE'RE NOT EVEN A NUISANCE, WIL! TELL ME YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING!
I'M THROWING THE WHOLE SPELL BOOK AT HIM, BUT IT'S NOT DOING ANY GOOD! AND THE BIGGER HE GETS, THE TOUGHER HE GETS!
EVEN OLD ONES HAVE WEAKNESSES. DO WE KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS MALOKER BLOKE?
GILES PROBABLY DOES!
I'LL PUT HIM ON MAGIC CONFERENCE.
GILES! GOT ANY INTEL ON THIS MONSTER?
MALOKER IS THE PROGENITOR OF ALL VAMPIRES. HE PASSED MANY OF HIS QUALITIES TO THEM--AS WELL AS HIS VULNERABILITIES.
SACRED OBJECTS, STAKES, FIRE--BUT THEY WILL NEED TO BE COMMENSURATE WITH HIS SCALE TO HAVE ANY EFFECT.
BLOODY BEAUTIFUL. ANYONE GOT A SPARE REDWOOD? AND THEN HOW DO WE SHOVE IT IN HIS CHEST? CAN WE MAKE THE LITTLE BIT A GIANT AGAIN?
HOLD ON.
I MIGHT HAVE A CRAZY IDEA.

THE REDWOOD INVESTMENT GROUP BUILDING? IT DOES HAVE THE APPROPRIATE POINTINESS, BUT IT DOESN'T LOOK TO BE MADE OF ACTUAL WOOD, DOES IT?
NO--BUT CAN WE MAKE IT A SACRED OBJECT?
IT'S WORTH A TRY. THE TOUGH PART'LL BE STEERING HIM OVER THERE.
I HEARD WHAT SPIKE SAID. CAN YOU MAKE ME GIANT?
PROBABLY. AND YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE FIGHTING AS ONE. BUT THAT'S A HUGE STRAIN ON YOUR SYSTEM, DAWNIE. I DON'T WANT TO--
GETTING STOMPED IS ALSO A STRAIN ON MY SYSTEM. AND WE'RE KINDA OUT OF OPTIONS, AREN'T WE?
YOU TALKED ME INTO IT. DON'T MAKE ME REGRET IT.
OH! MAKE MY CLOTHES BIG, TOO. I DON'T WANNA FLASH THE WHOLE CITY!
THAT'S THE LEAST OF OUR WORRIES. IF HE GETS HIS HANDS ON YOU, YOU'RE DEAD. KEEP YOUR DISTANCE.
I'LL BE BACK. SOON, I HOPE. BE CAREFUL!
WHOOOOAAAA!
I'M GETTING THE FEELING I REALLY HATED THIS THE LAST TIME...

HEY, BIG BOY!
BITE ME.
AH. YOU MUST BE THE GOD WHO RULES THIS AGE.
THE ONE I WILL KILL TO MAKE IT MINE!
OH, CRAP. I WAS NOT INFORMED HE COULD FLY!
THIS RODENT DOESN'T GET WITHIN TWO BLOCKS OF MY SISTER! GET INTO POSITION!
ON MY WAY!


NO!! DON'T HURT MY MASTER!
DAMN IT, XANDER, IN A FEW MORE MINUTES HE WON'T BE YOUR MASTER ANYMORE!
DRACULA CAN COME BACK FROM BEING STAKED, REMEMBER? BUT IF MALOKER CONSUMES HIM, HE'S GONE FOREVER.
I'VE GOT A BIGGER WORRY. THAT BUFFY'S PLAN WON'T SOLVE THE PROBLEM.
YOU KNOW DRACULA BETTER THAN ANYONE. IT'S UP TO YOU TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO WRITE IN THAT BOOK THAT CAN END THIS.
ME? HOW CAN I--WE SHOULD ASK GILES, OR WILLOW--
BELIEVE ME, I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL. IT'S NICE WHEN SOMEONE ELSE TELLS YOU WHAT TO DO. BUT YOU CAN'T RUN FROM THIS, XANDER.
NOT WITHOUT HURTING EVERYONE YOU SAY YOU LOVE. DRACULA, BUFFY...
...DAWN.
ANDREW. GIVE ME THE BOOK.
LET'S HAUL OUR BUTTS OVER TO THAT BUILDING.
GOOD OR BAD, THIS IS GONNA END THERE.

I HUNGER!

END OF THE LINE! WHERE'S WILLOW?

HERE! SORRY! GO TO IT, FATHER!

THERE'S NORMALLY A BIT OF CEREMONY...

NO OFFENSE, BUT I'M A JEWISH WICCAN AND WE'RE ALL ABOUT TO DIE!

BLESS THIS BUILDING AND ALL WHO USE IT--

GIANT VAMPIRE COMING RIGHT AT US!

WEASKYOUR BLESSINGTHROUGH CHRISTOURLORD AMEN!

OH, NO...

DON'T YOU TOUCH MY SISTER!

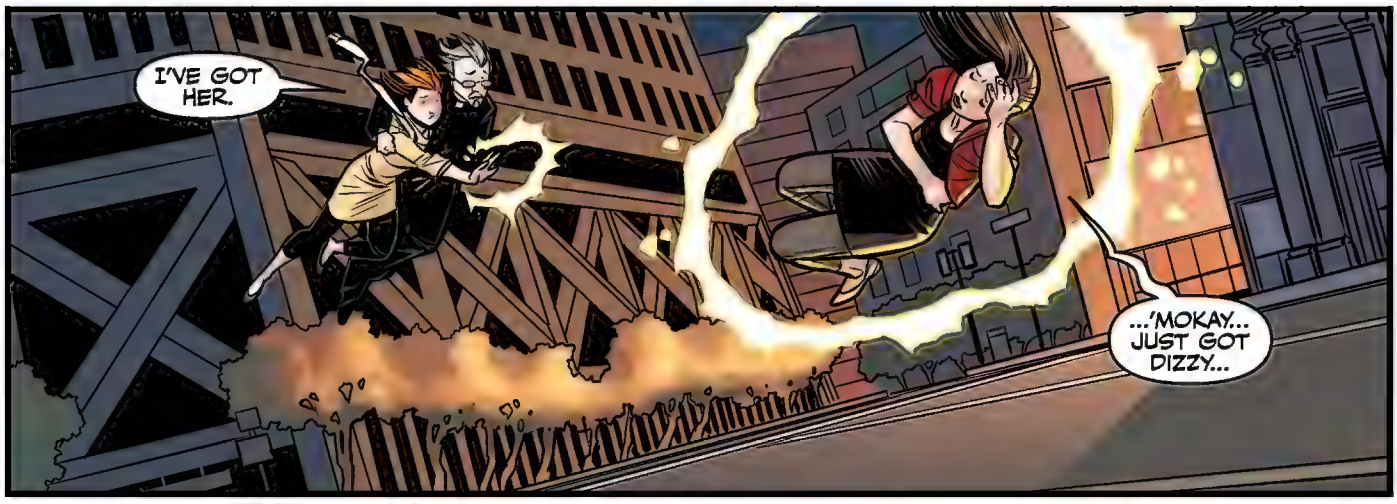
SHLURK

SHHREEEEE

NOW!

SHREEEEE

SHHNNKKK
PAFT
I... I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD...
DAWNIE!

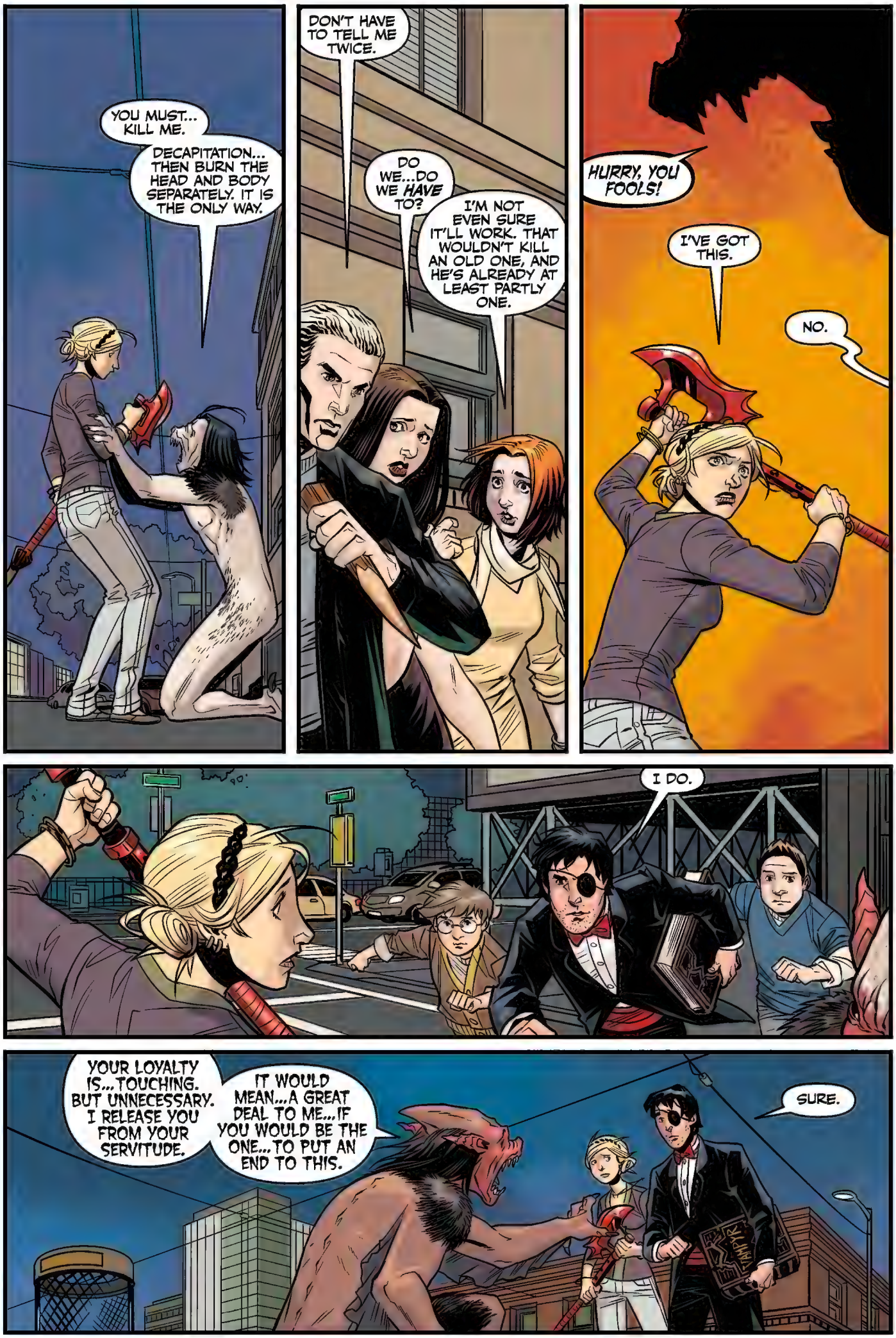

I'VE GOT HER.
...'MOKAY... JUST GOT DIZZY...

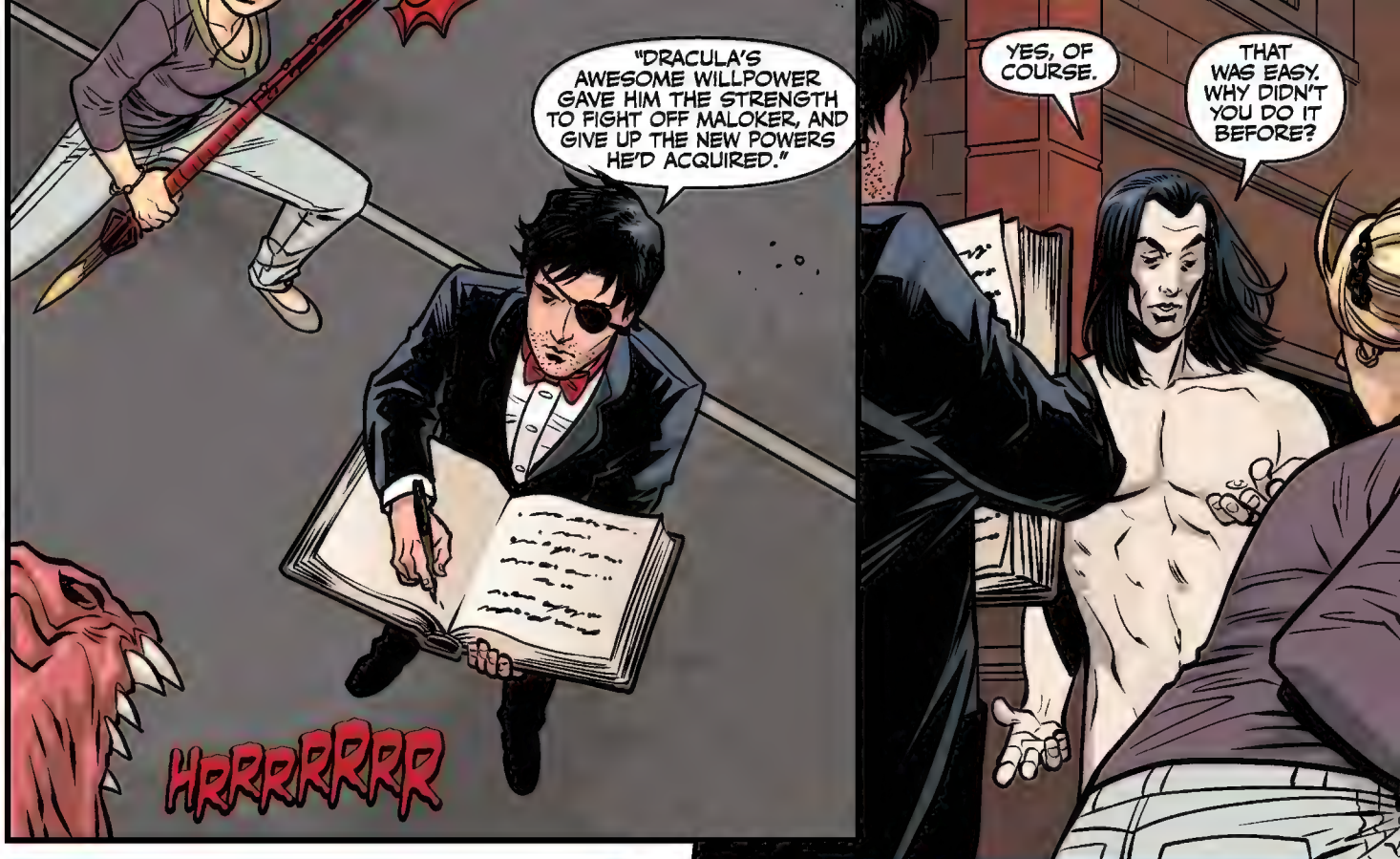
WHAT HAPPENED?
HEAD RUSH. I'M FINE NOW.
LIKE I SAID, WITH THIS RAW, NEW MAGIC, BEING THAT BIG'S A STRAIN ON THE SYSTEM. NO MORE GIANT-SIZE ESCAPADES FOR *YOU*, YOUNG LADY.

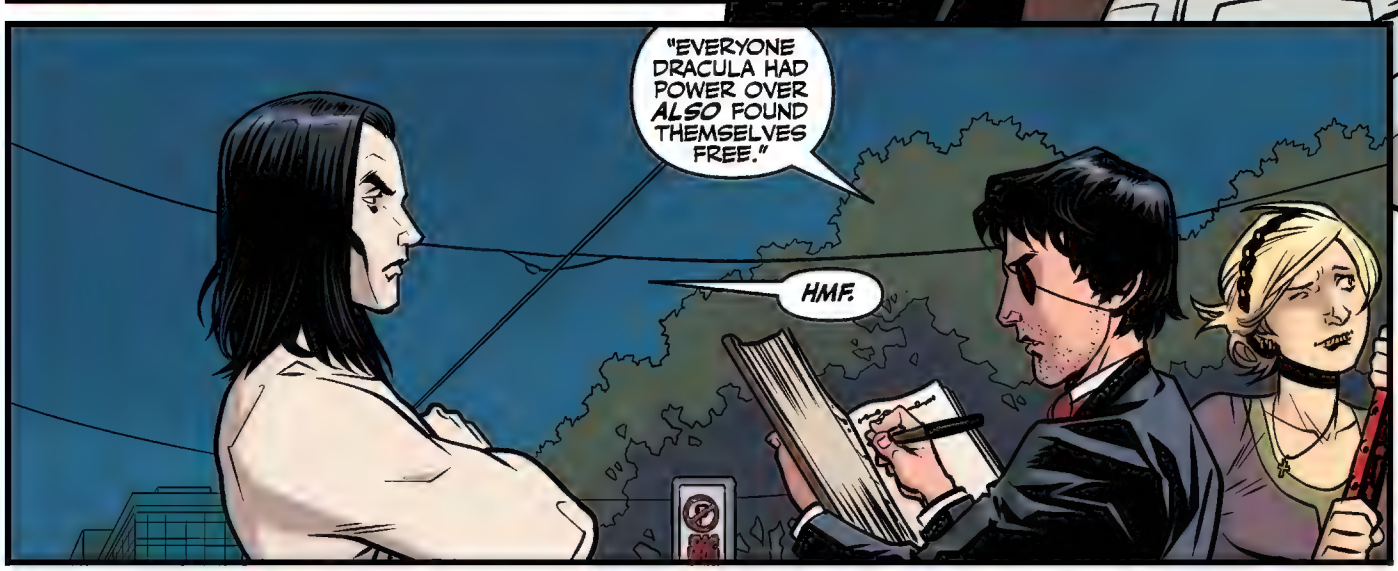
SO DID WE WIN?
I THINK WE'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT.
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, FATHER... BUT YOU MIGHT WANT TO HEAD FOR HIGHER GROUND.

THAT WOULD BE... GOOD ADVICE... FOR YOU ALL.
I THANK YOU. THAT WAS AGONY. AND I FEAR...

GHAA!
I FEAR I AM ABOUT TO ENDURE IT AGAIN!


YOU MUST... KILL ME.
DECAPITATION... THEN BURN THE HEAD AND BODY SEPARATELY. IT IS THE ONLY WAY.
DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE.
DO WE...DO WE *HAVE* TO?
I'M NOT EVEN SURE IT'LL WORK. THAT WOULDN'T KILL AN OLD ONE, AND HE'S ALREADY AT LEAST PARTLY ONE.
HURRY, YOU FOOLS!
I'VE GOT THIS.
NO.
I DO.
YOUR LOYALTY IS...TOUCHING. BUT UNNECESSARY. I RELEASE YOU FROM YOUR SERVITUDE.
IT WOULD MEAN...A GREAT DEAL TO ME...IF YOU WOULD BE THE ONE...TO PUT AN END TO THIS.
SURE.

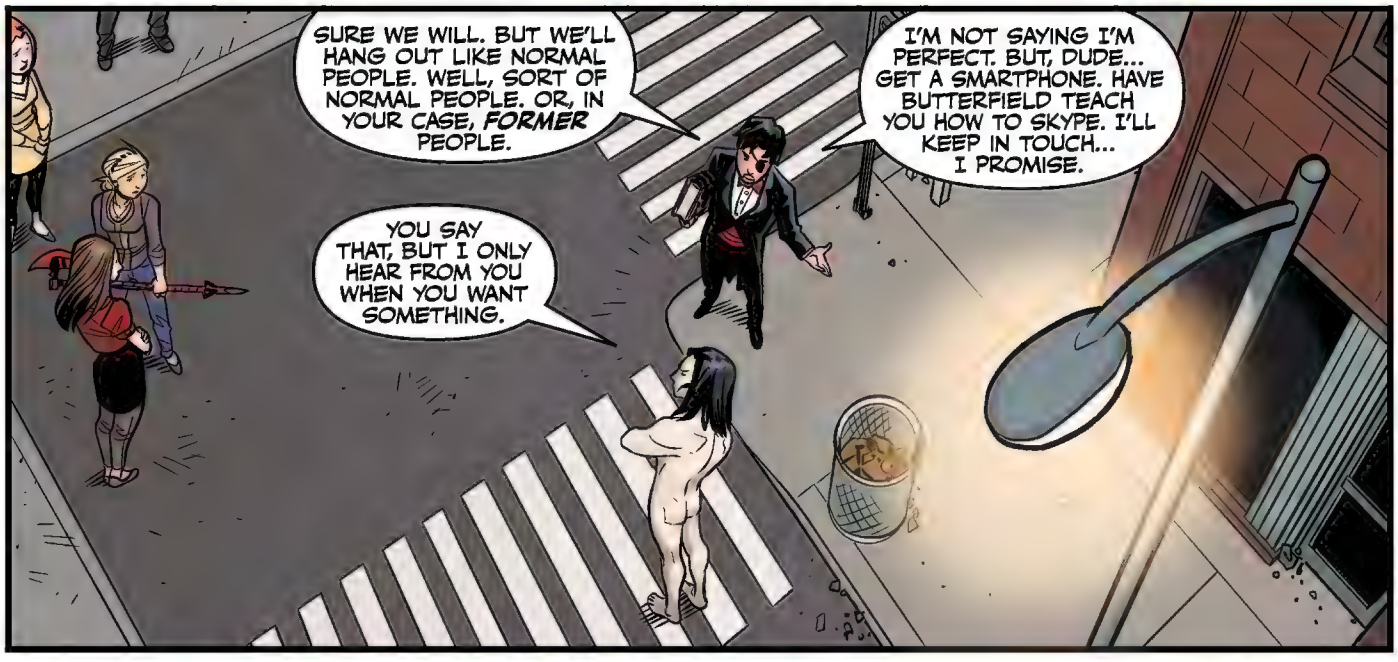

"DRACULA'S AWESOME WILLPOWER GAVE HIM THE STRENGTH TO FIGHT OFF MALOKER, AND GIVE UP THE NEW POWERS HE'D ACQUIRED."
HRRRRRRR
YES, OF COURSE.
THAT WAS EASY. WHY DIDN'T YOU DO IT BEFORE?


"EVERYONE DRACULA HAD POWER OVER *ALSO* FOUND THEMSELVES FREE."
HMF.

I COULD JUST MESMERIZE YOU AGAIN.
BUT YOU WON'T.
YOU CAN'T *FORCE* SOMEONE TO CARE ABOUT YOU.

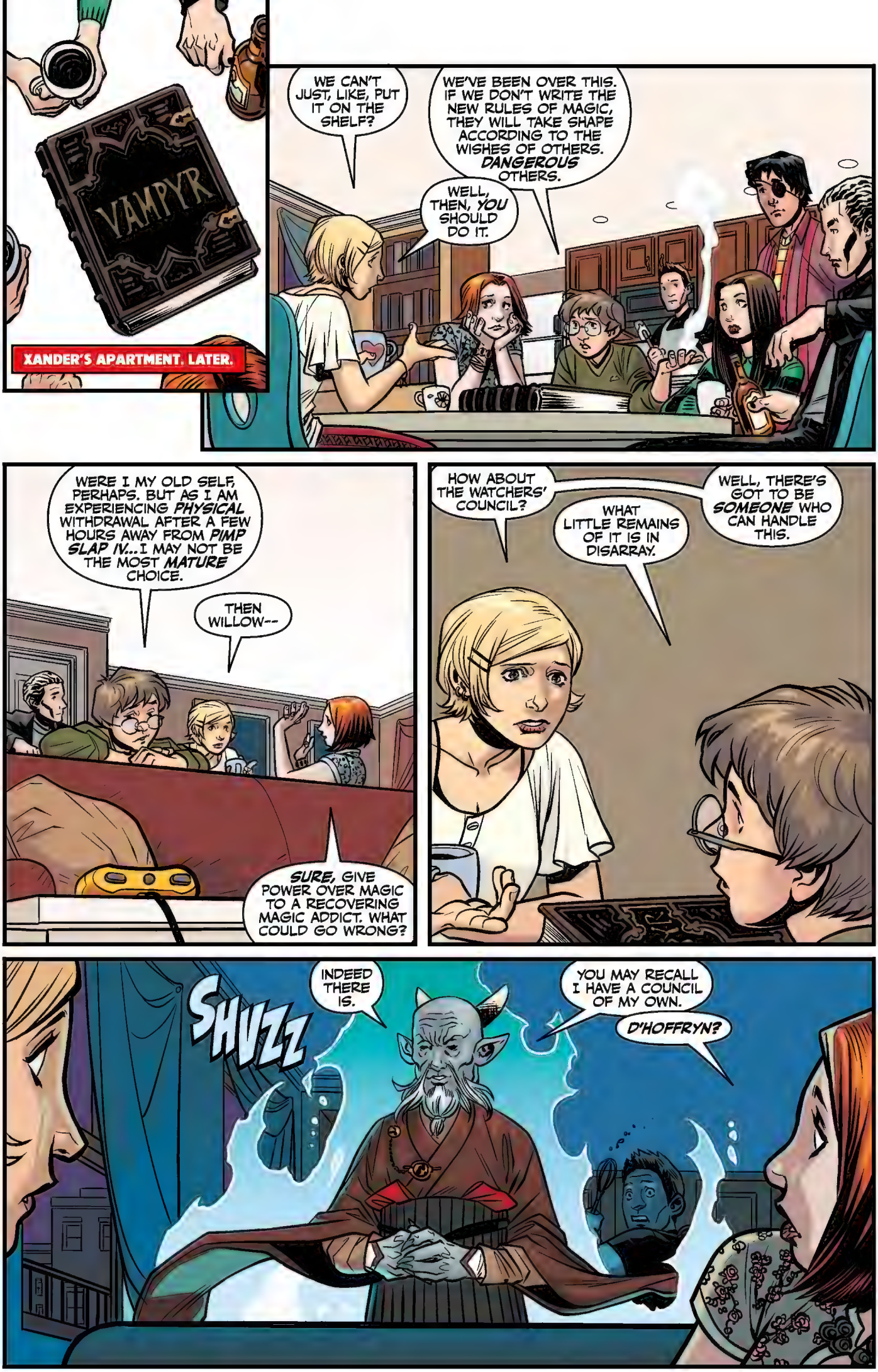
IT DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING IF IT'S FAKE.
CAFE

I FIND THIS CITY LESS THAN HOSPITABLE. I SHALL BE RETURNING HOME FORTHWITH.
I TAKE IT WE WILL NOT BE SEEING EACH OTHER AGAIN...?

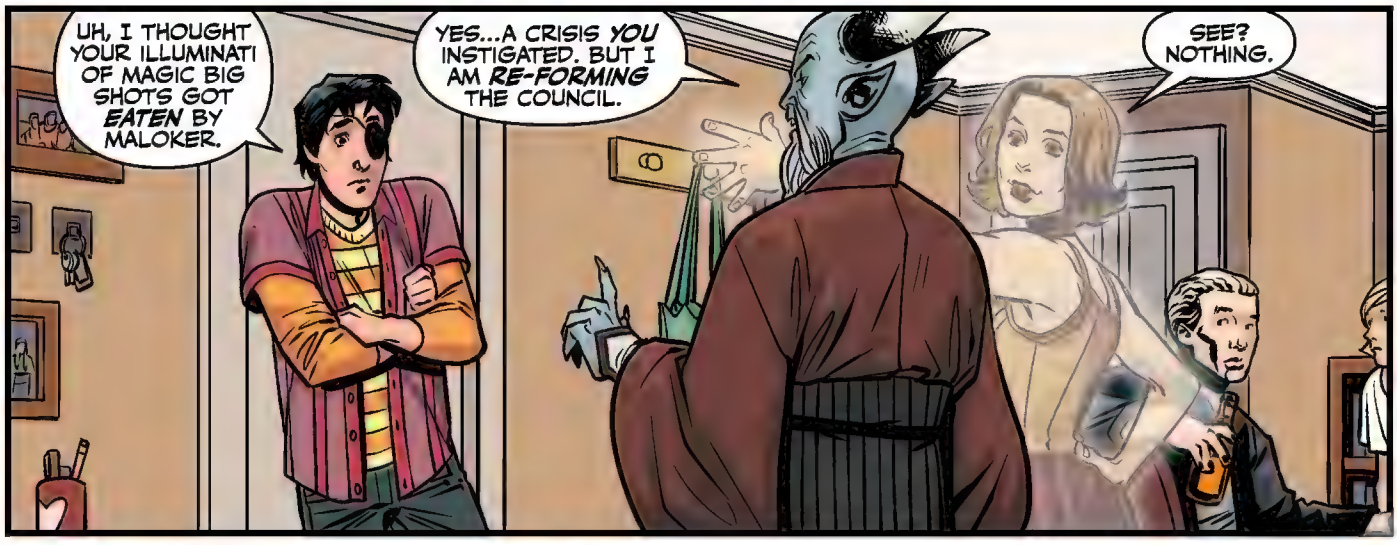

SURE WE WILL. BUT WE'LL HANG OUT LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE. WELL, SORT OF NORMAL PEOPLE. OR, IN YOUR CASE, *FORMER* PEOPLE.
I'M NOT SAYING I'M PERFECT. BUT, DUDE... GET A SMARTPHONE. HAVE BUTTERFIELD TEACH YOU HOW TO SKYPE. I'LL KEEP IN TOUCH... I PROMISE.
YOU SAY THAT, BUT I ONLY HEAR FROM YOU WHEN YOU WANT SOMETHING.

I...WILL MISS YOU, MANSER--
XANDER.
ME TOO, MASTER--
--BUDDY.
WHEN I GET A CHANCE, I'LL COME VISIT. WE CAN BREAK OUT THE MOTORCYCLES, DO AN *EASY RIDER* ACROSS TRANSYLVANIA.

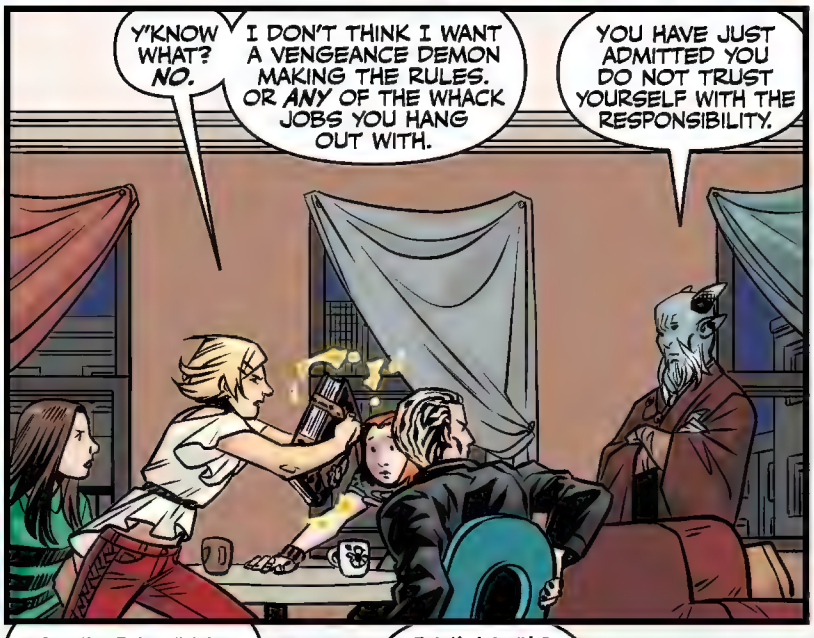
A LAST WORD OF WARNING: EXERCISE CARE WITH THAT BOOK. IT IS A SINGULARLY DANGEROUS THING. YOU HAVE AN UNMATCHED OPPORTUNITY TO CHART THE COURSE OF THE FUTURE...
...OR BRING *UNTOLD DISASTER UPON US ALL.*
AND YOU'VE JUST SEEN IN WHICH DIRECTION THE ODDS ARE STACKED.

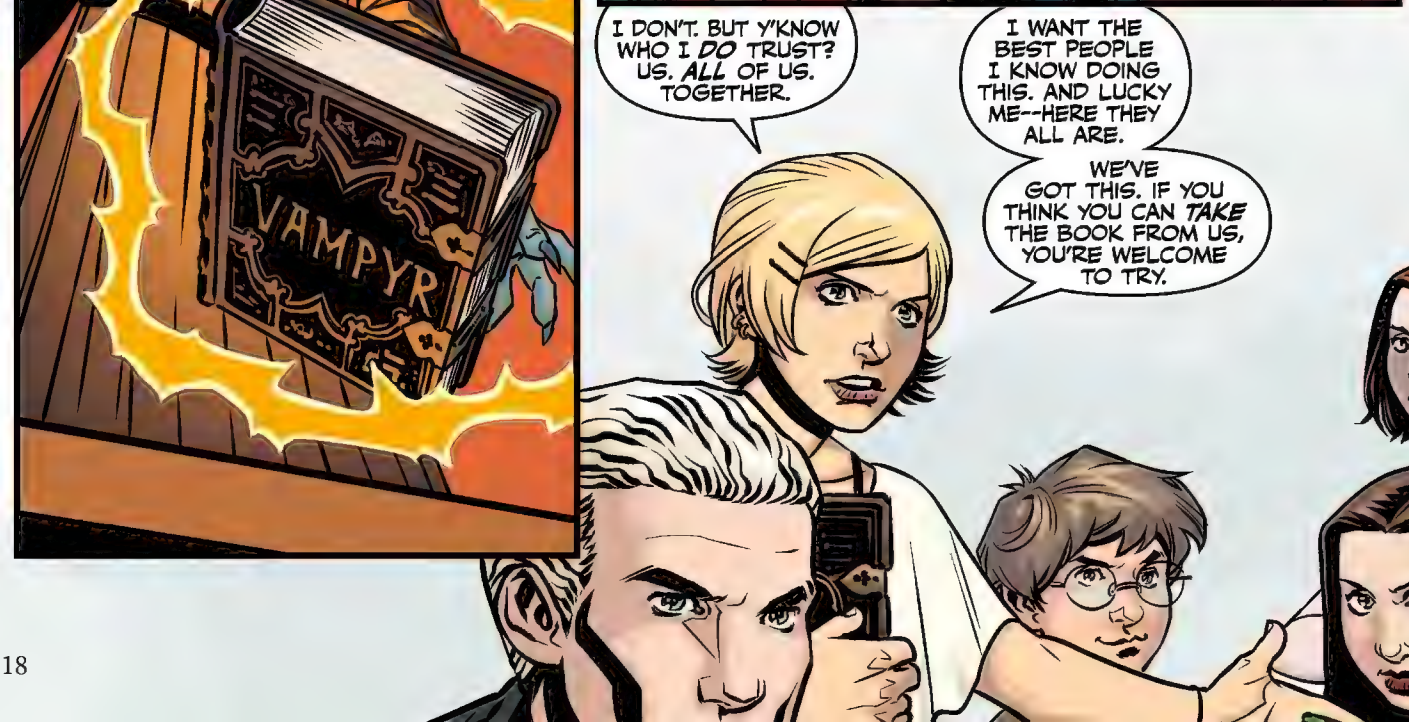

VAMPYR
XANDER'S APARTMENT. LATER.
WE CAN'T JUST, LIKE, PUT IT ON THE SHELF?
WE'VE BEEN OVER THIS. IF WE DON'T WRITE THE NEW RULES OF MAGIC, THEY WILL TAKE SHAPE ACCORDING TO THE WISHES OF OTHERS. DANGEROUS OTHERS.
WELL, THEN, YOU SHOULD DO IT.
WERE I MY OLD SELF, PERHAPS. BUT AS I AM EXPERIENCING PHYSICAL WITHDRAWAL AFTER A FEW HOURS AWAY FROM PIMP SLAP IV... I MAY NOT BE THE MOST MATURE CHOICE.
THEN WILLOW--
SURE, GIVE POWER OVER MAGIC TO A RECOVERING MAGIC ADDICT. WHAT COULD GO WRONG?
HOW ABOUT THE WATCHERS' COUNCIL?
WHAT LITTLE REMAINS OF IT IS IN DISARRAY.
WELL, THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMEONE WHO CAN HANDLE THIS.
SHVZZ
INDEED THERE IS.
YOU MAY RECALL I HAVE A COUNCIL OF MY OWN.
D'HOFFRYN?

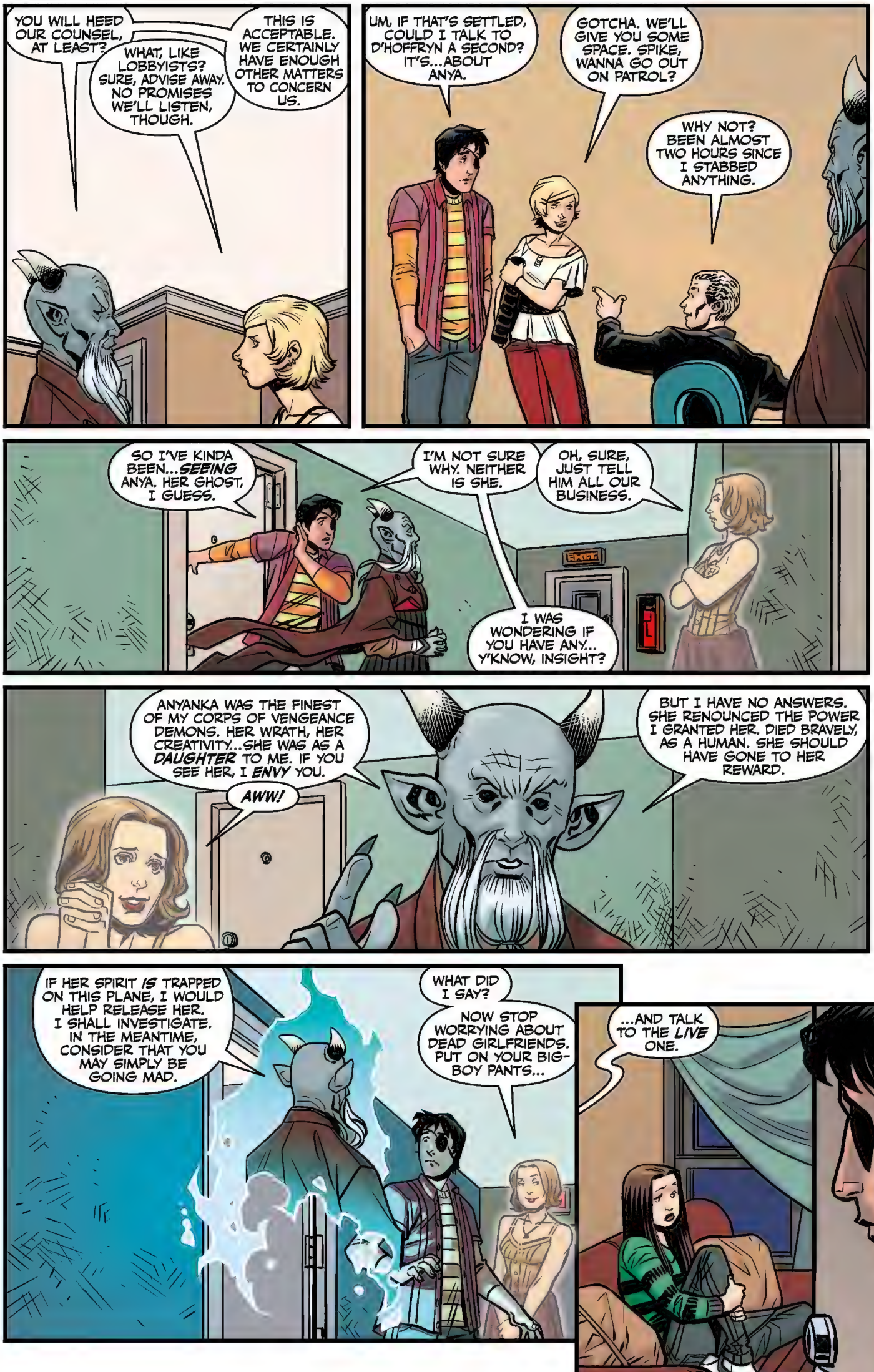
D'HOFFRYN...?
I DON'T THINK HE CAN SEE ME, ANY MORE THAN THE OTHERS. HE STOPPED BEING THE BOSS OF ME A LONG TIME AGO.

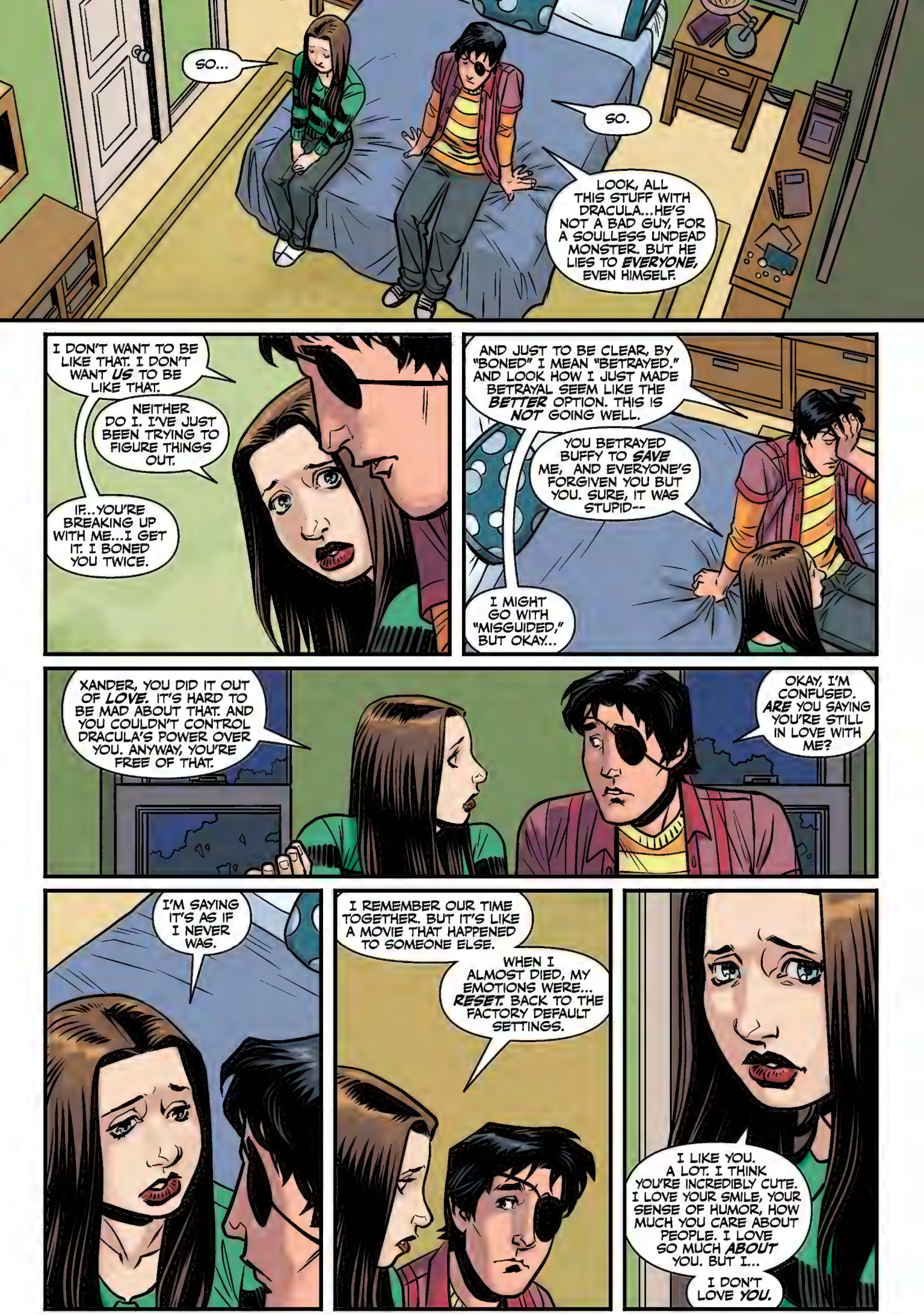

UH, I THOUGHT YOUR ILLUMINATI OF MAGIC BIG SHOTS GOT *EATEN* BY MALOKER.
YES...A CRISIS *YOU* INSTIGATED. BUT I AM *RE-FORMING* THE COUNCIL.
SEE? NOTHING.

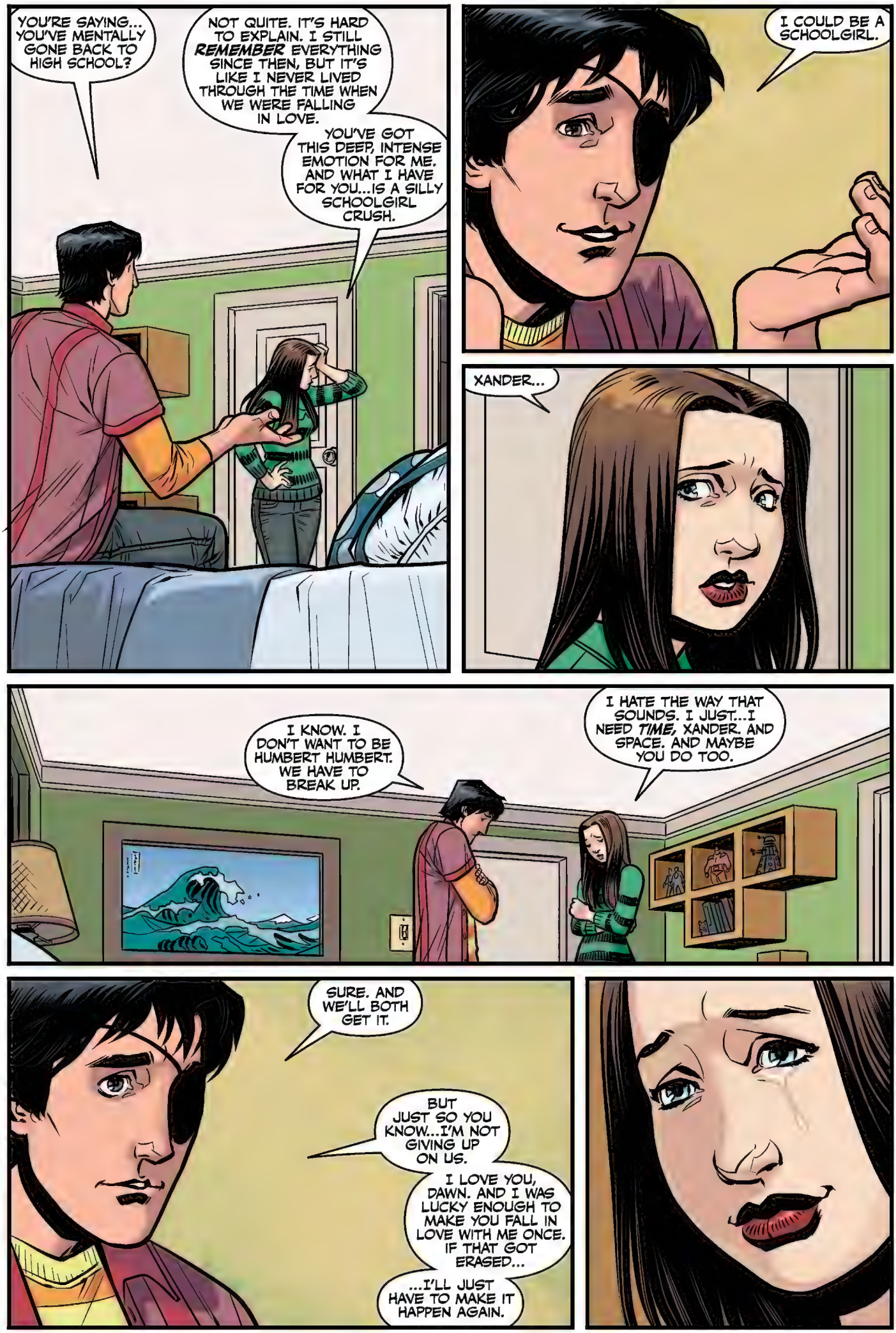
WE HAVE THE REQUISITE POWER, EXPERIENCE, AND WISDOM TO SHAPE THE LAWS OF THE NEW ERA.
WE SHALL GLADLY RELIEVE YOU OF YOUR BURDEN.
VAMPYR


Y'KNOW WHAT? *NO.*
I DON'T THINK I WANT A VENGEANCE DEMON MAKING THE RULES. OR *ANY* OF THE WHACK JOBS YOU HANG OUT WITH.
YOU HAVE JUST ADMITTED YOU DO NOT TRUST YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY.

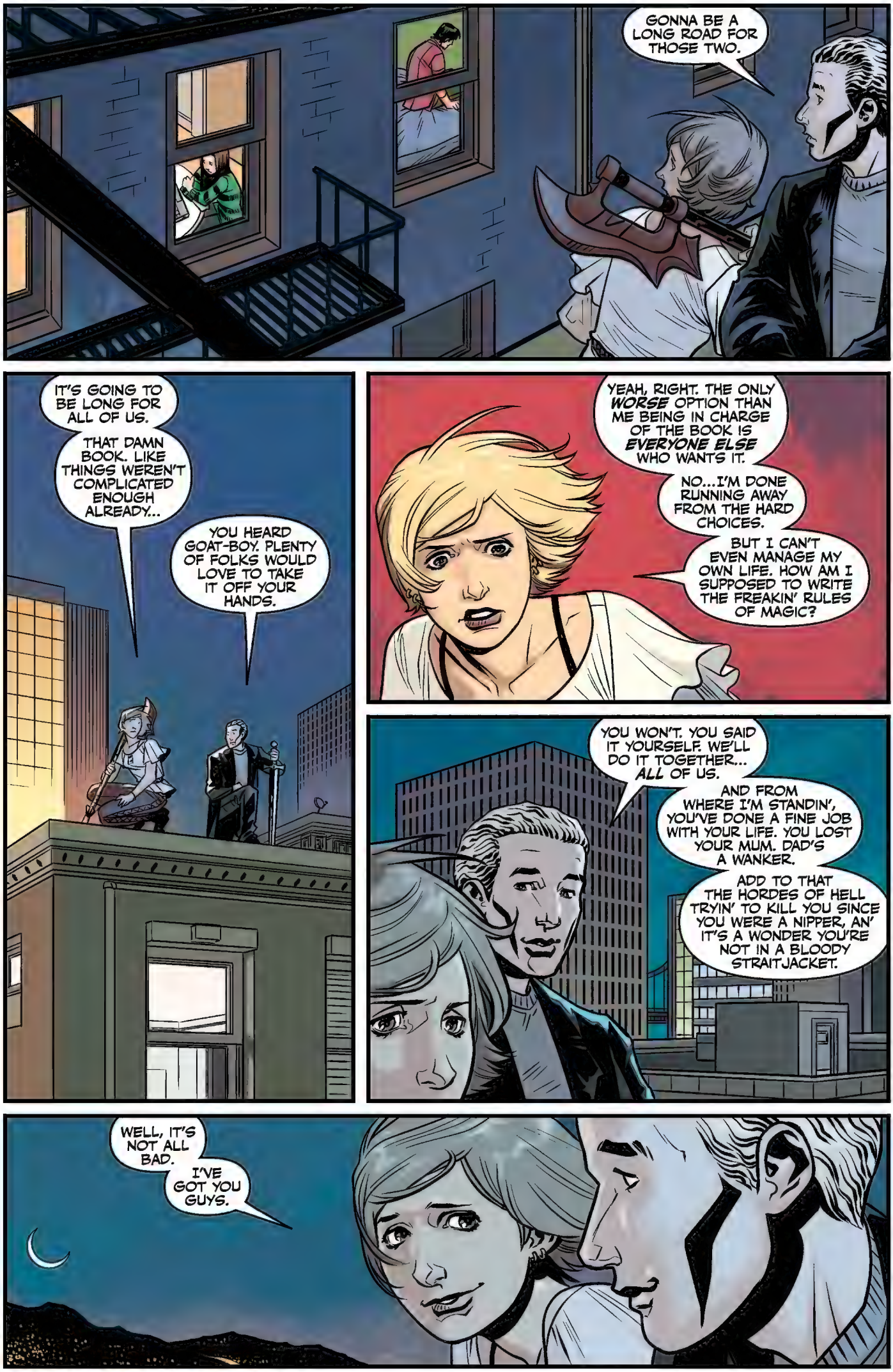

I DON'T. BUT Y'KNOW WHO I *DO* TRUST? US. *ALL* OF US. TOGETHER.
I WANT THE BEST PEOPLE I KNOW DOING THIS. AND LUCKY ME--HERE THEY ALL ARE.
WE'VE GOT THIS. IF YOU THINK YOU CAN *TAKE* THE BOOK FROM US, YOU'RE WELCOME TO TRY.


YOU WILL HEED OUR COUNSEL, AT LEAST?
WHAT, LIKE LOBBYISTS? SURE, ADVISE AWAY. NO PROMISES WE'LL LISTEN, THOUGH.
THIS IS ACCEPTABLE. WE CERTAINLY HAVE ENOUGH OTHER MATTERS TO CONCERN US.
UM, IF THAT'S SETTLED, COULD I TALK TO D'HOFFRYN A SECOND? IT'S...ABOUT ANYA.
GOTCHA. WE'LL GIVE YOU SOME SPACE. SPIKE, WANNA GO OUT ON PATROL?
WHY NOT? BEEN ALMOST TWO HOURS SINCE I STABBED ANYTHING.
SO I'VE KINDA BEEN...SEEING ANYA. HER GHOST, I GUESS.
I'M NOT SURE WHY. NEITHER IS SHE.
OH, SURE, JUST TELL HIM ALL OUR BUSINESS.
I WAS WONDERING IF YOU HAVE ANY... Y'KNOW, INSIGHT?
ANYANKA WAS THE FINEST OF MY CORPS OF VENGEANCE DEMONS. HER WRATH, HER CREATIVITY...SHE WAS AS A DAUGHTER TO ME. IF YOU SEE HER, I ENVY YOU.
AWW!
BUT I HAVE NO ANSWERS. SHE RENOUNCED THE POWER I GRANTED HER. DIED BRAVELY, AS A HUMAN. SHE SHOULD HAVE GONE TO HER REWARD.
IF HER SPIRIT IS TRAPPED ON THIS PLANE, I WOULD HELP RELEASE HER. I SHALL INVESTIGATE. IN THE MEANTIME, CONSIDER THAT YOU MAY SIMPLY BE GOING MAD.
WHAT DID I SAY?
NOW STOP WORRYING ABOUT DEAD GIRLFRIENDS. PUT ON YOUR BIG-BOY PANTS...
...AND TALK TO THE LIVE ONE.


SO...
SO.
LOOK, ALL THIS STUFF WITH DRACULA...HE'S NOT A BAD GUY, FOR A SOULLESS UNDEAD MONSTER. BUT HE LIES TO EVERYONE, EVEN HIMSELF.
I DON'T WANT TO BE LIKE THAT. I DON'T WANT US TO BE LIKE THAT.
NEITHER DO I. I'VE JUST BEEN TRYING TO FIGURE THINGS OUT.
IF...YOU'RE BREAKING UP WITH ME...I GET IT. I BONED YOU TWICE.
AND JUST TO BE CLEAR, BY "BONED" I MEAN "BETRAYED." AND LOOK HOW I JUST MADE BETRAYAL SEEM LIKE THE BETTER OPTION. THIS IS NOT GOING WELL.
YOU BETRAYED BUFFY TO SAVE ME, AND EVERYONE'S FORGIVEN YOU BUT YOU. SURE, IT WAS STUPID--
I MIGHT GO WITH "MISGUIDED," BUT OKAY...
XANDER, YOU DID IT OUT OF LOVE. IT'S HARD TO BE MAD ABOUT THAT. AND YOU COULDN'T CONTROL DRACULA'S POWER OVER YOU. ANYWAY, YOU'RE FREE OF THAT.
OKAY, I'M CONFUSED. ARE YOU SAYING YOU'RE STILL IN LOVE WITH ME?
I'M SAYING IT'S AS IF I NEVER WAS.
I REMEMBER OUR TIME TOGETHER. BUT IT'S LIKE A MOVIE THAT HAPPENED TO SOMEONE ELSE.
WHEN I ALMOST DIED, MY EMOTIONS WERE... RESET. BACK TO THE FACTORY DEFAULT SETTINGS.
I LIKE YOU. A LOT. I THINK YOU'RE INCREDIBLY CUTE. I LOVE YOUR SMILE, YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR, HOW MUCH YOU CARE ABOUT PEOPLE. I LOVE SO MUCH ABOUT YOU. BUT I...
I DON'T LOVE YOU.

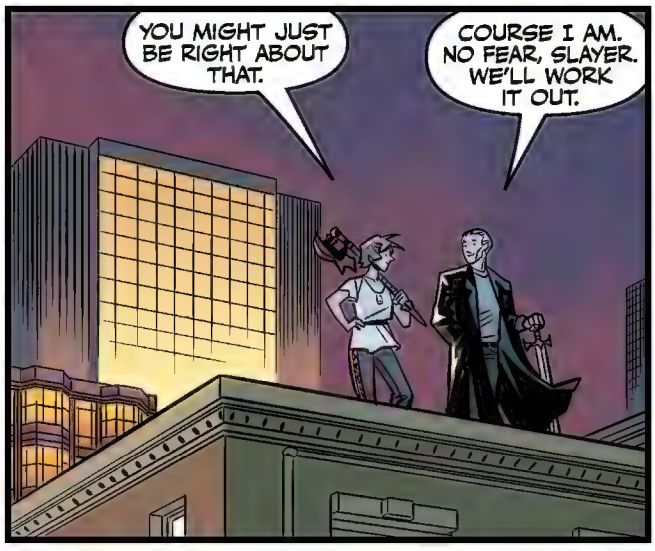

YOU'RE SAYING... YOU'VE MENTALLY GONE BACK TO HIGH SCHOOL?
NOT QUITE. IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN. I STILL REMEMBER EVERYTHING SINCE THEN, BUT IT'S LIKE I NEVER LIVED THROUGH THE TIME WHEN WE WERE FALLING IN LOVE.
YOU'VE GOT THIS DEEP, INTENSE EMOTION FOR ME. AND WHAT I HAVE FOR YOU...IS A SILLY SCHOOLGIRL CRUSH.
I COULD BE A SCHOOLGIRL.
XANDER...
I KNOW. I DON'T WANT TO BE HUMBERT HUMBERT. WE HAVE TO BREAK UP.
I HATE THE WAY THAT SOUNDS. I JUST...I NEED TIME, XANDER. AND SPACE. AND MAYBE YOU DO TOO.
SURE. AND WE'LL BOTH GET IT.
BUT JUST SO YOU KNOW...I'M NOT GIVING UP ON US.
I LOVE YOU, DAWN. AND I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH ME ONCE. IF THAT GOT ERASED...
...I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE IT HAPPEN AGAIN.

IT'S OKAY. TIME AND SPACE, RIGHT?
YEAH.
TIME AND SPACE.

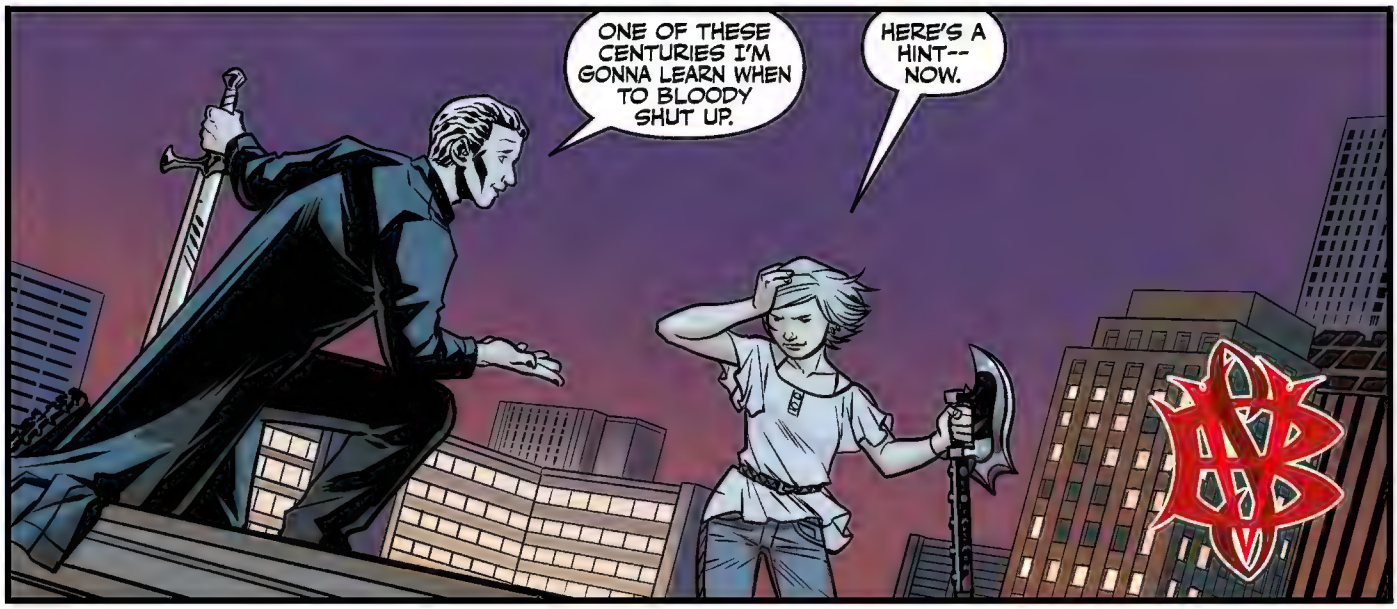

GONNA BE A LONG ROAD FOR THOSE TWO.
IT'S GOING TO BE LONG FOR ALL OF US.
THAT DAMN BOOK. LIKE THINGS WEREN'T COMPLICATED ENOUGH ALREADY...
YOU HEARD GOAT-BOY. PLENTY OF FOLKS WOULD LOVE TO TAKE IT OFF YOUR HANDS.
YEAH, RIGHT. THE ONLY WORSE OPTION THAN ME BEING IN CHARGE OF THE BOOK IS EVERYONE ELSE WHO WANTS IT.
NO...I'M DONE RUNNING AWAY FROM THE HARD CHOICES.
BUT I CAN'T EVEN MANAGE MY OWN LIFE. HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO WRITE THE FREAKIN' RULES OF MAGIC?
YOU WON'T. YOU SAID IT YOURSELF. WE'LL DO IT TOGETHER... ALL OF US.
AND FROM WHERE I'M STANDIN', YOU'VE DONE A FINE JOB WITH YOUR LIFE. YOU LOST YOUR MUM. DAD'S A WANKER.
ADD TO THAT THE HORDES OF HELL TRYIN' TO KILL YOU SINCE YOU WERE A NIPPER, AN' IT'S A WONDER YOU'RE NOT IN A BLOODY STRAITJACKET.
WELL, IT'S NOT ALL BAD.
I'VE GOT YOU GUYS.

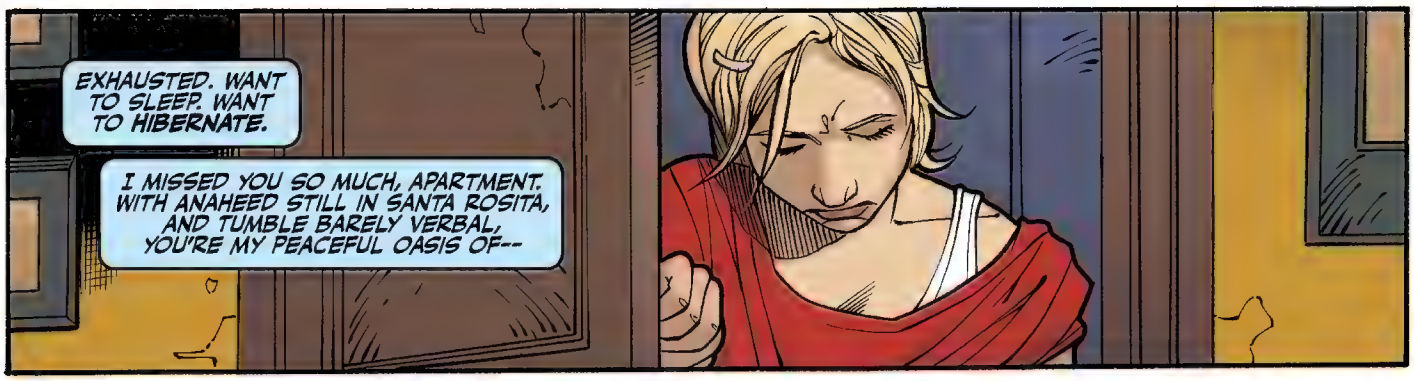
MY POINT EXACTLY.
WE ALL HAVE TWO FAMILIES. THE ONE WE'RE BORN INTO, AND THE ONE WE CHOOSE.

SEEMS T' ME YOU'VE PICKED A PRETTY DAMN GOOD ONE.

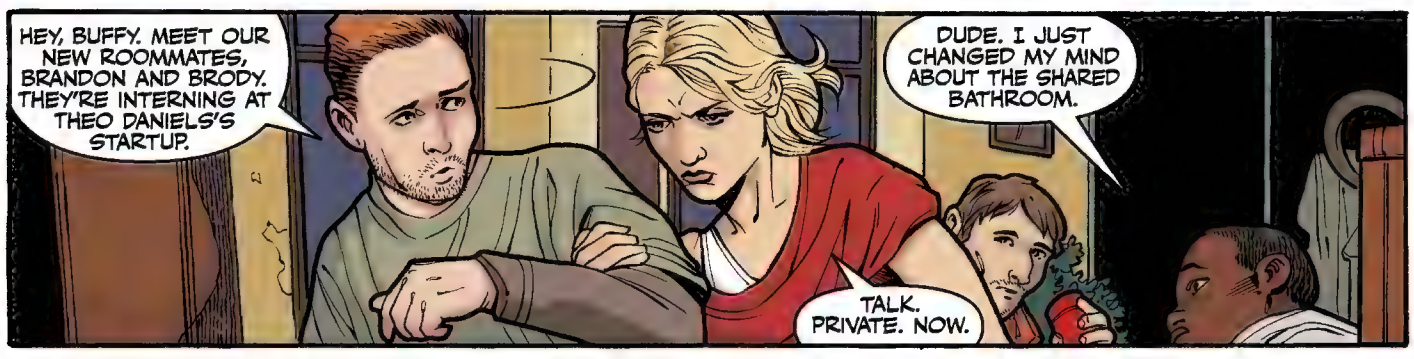

YOU MIGHT JUST BE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.
COURSE I AM. NO FEAR, SLAYER. WE'LL WORK IT OUT.

IF WE DON'T GET SLAUGHTERED BY THE MASSES OF DEMONS WHO'RE GONNA WANNA GET THEIR TALONS ON THAT BOOK.

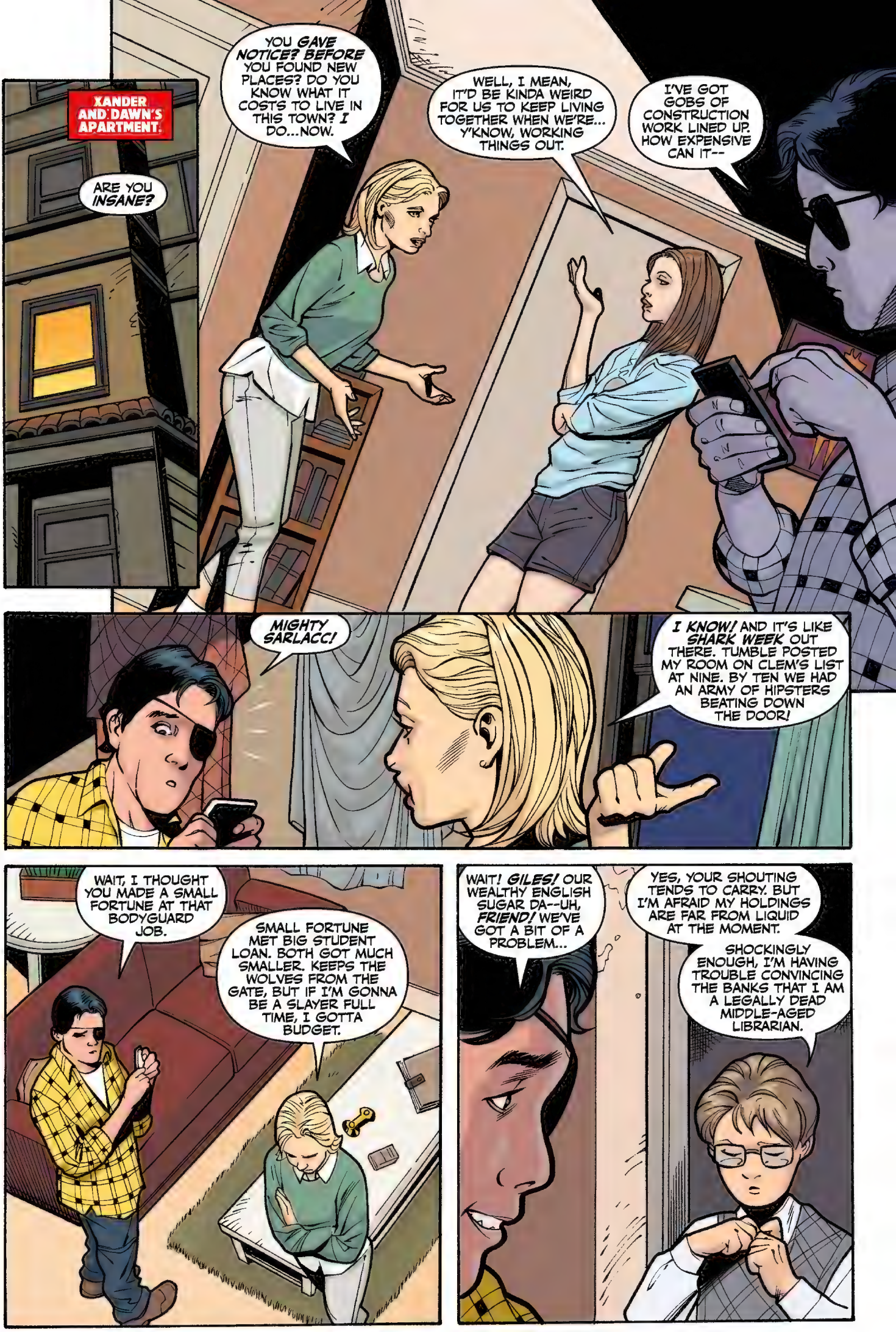

ONE OF THESE CENTURIES I'M GONNA LEARN WHEN TO BLOODY SHUT UP.
HERE'S A HINT-- NOW.

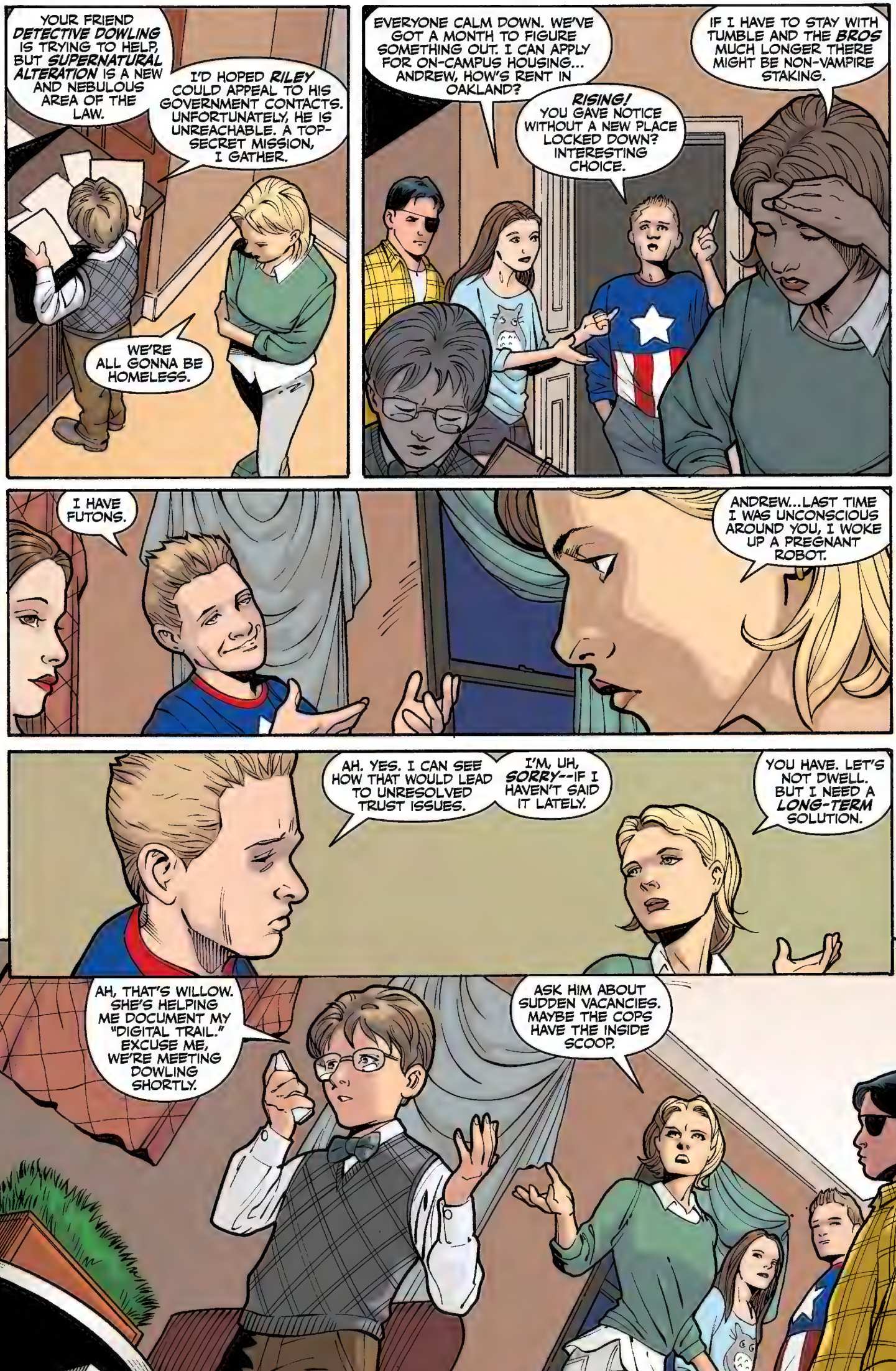

EXHAUSTED. WANT TO SLEEP. WANT TO HIBERNATE.
I MISSED YOU SO MUCH, APARTMENT. WITH ANAHEED STILL IN SANTA ROSITA, AND TUMBLE BARELY VERBAL, YOU'RE MY PEACEFUL OASIS OF--

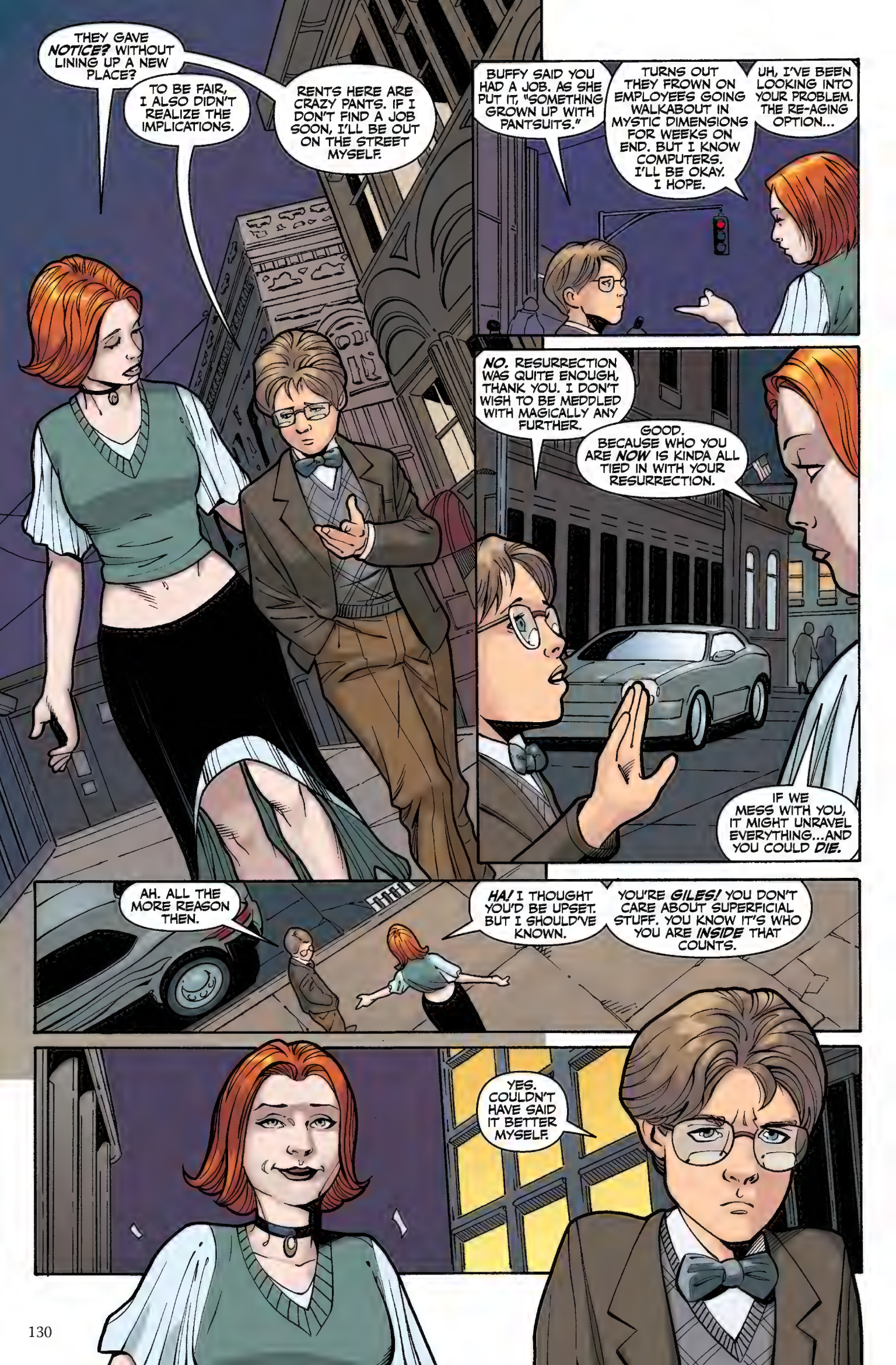
PART ONE
I WISH

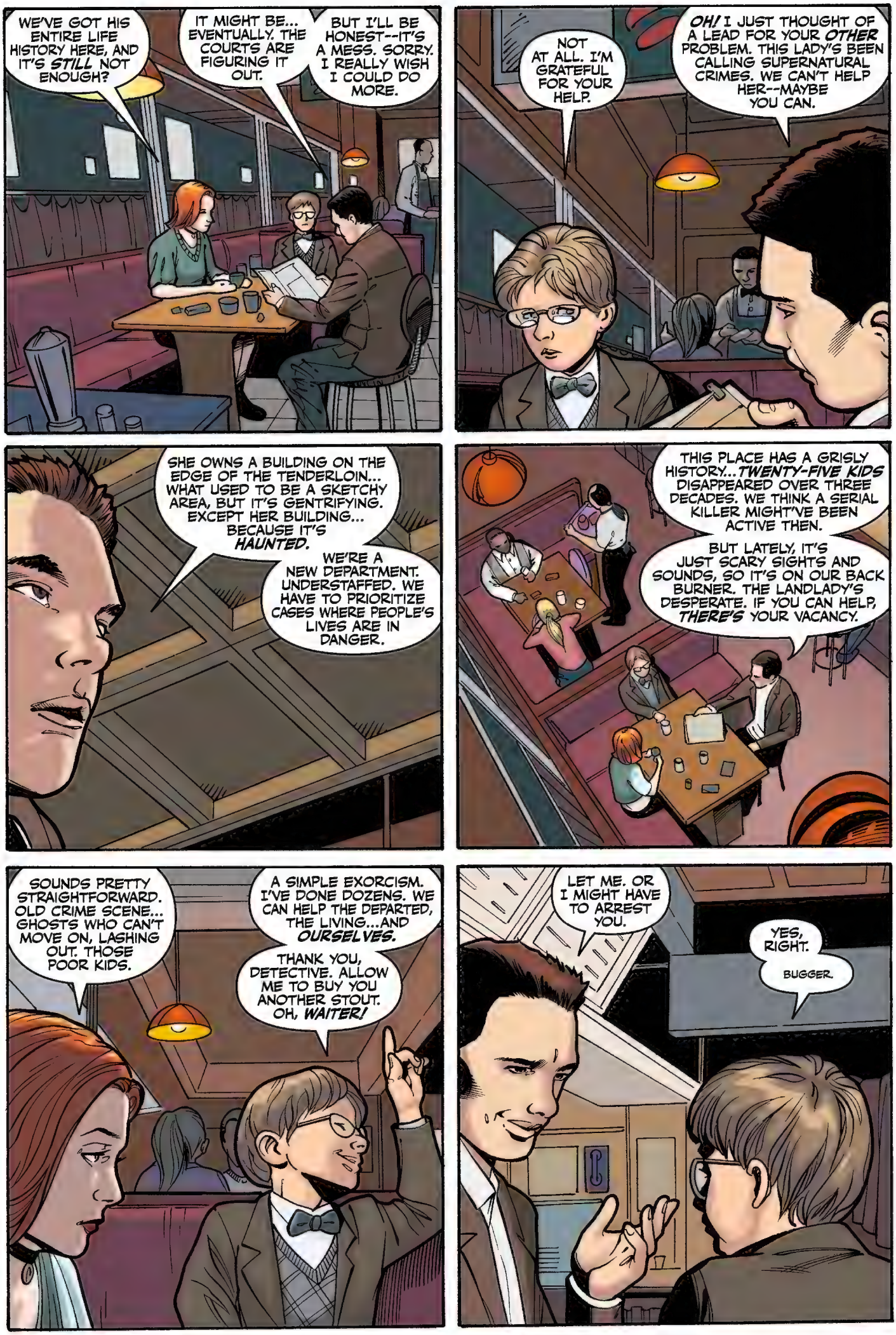

HEY, BUFFY. MEET OUR NEW ROOMMATES, BRANDON AND BRODY. THEY'RE INTERNING AT THEO DANIELS'S STARTUP.
DUDE. I JUST CHANGED MY MIND ABOUT THE SHARED BATHROOM.
TALK. PRIVATE. NOW.

ANAHEED MOVED OUT. WHICH MEANS NEW LEASE. WHICH MEANS THE LANDLORD CAN RAISE OUR RENT TO MARKET VALUE.
HAVE YOU SEEN THE HOUSING PRICES IN THIS TOWN? EVEN WITH BOTH OF 'EM, WE CAN BARELY AFFORD THIS PLACE.
THEY'RE NOT BAD GUYS IF YOU CAN GET PAST THEIR INSTITUTIONALIZED WHITE MALE PRIVILEGE.
I GET IT. I DO. I'M NOT MAD. BUT DESPITE MY YOUTH, I'M TOO OLD FOR THIS CRAP.
I'M GIVING NOTICE.

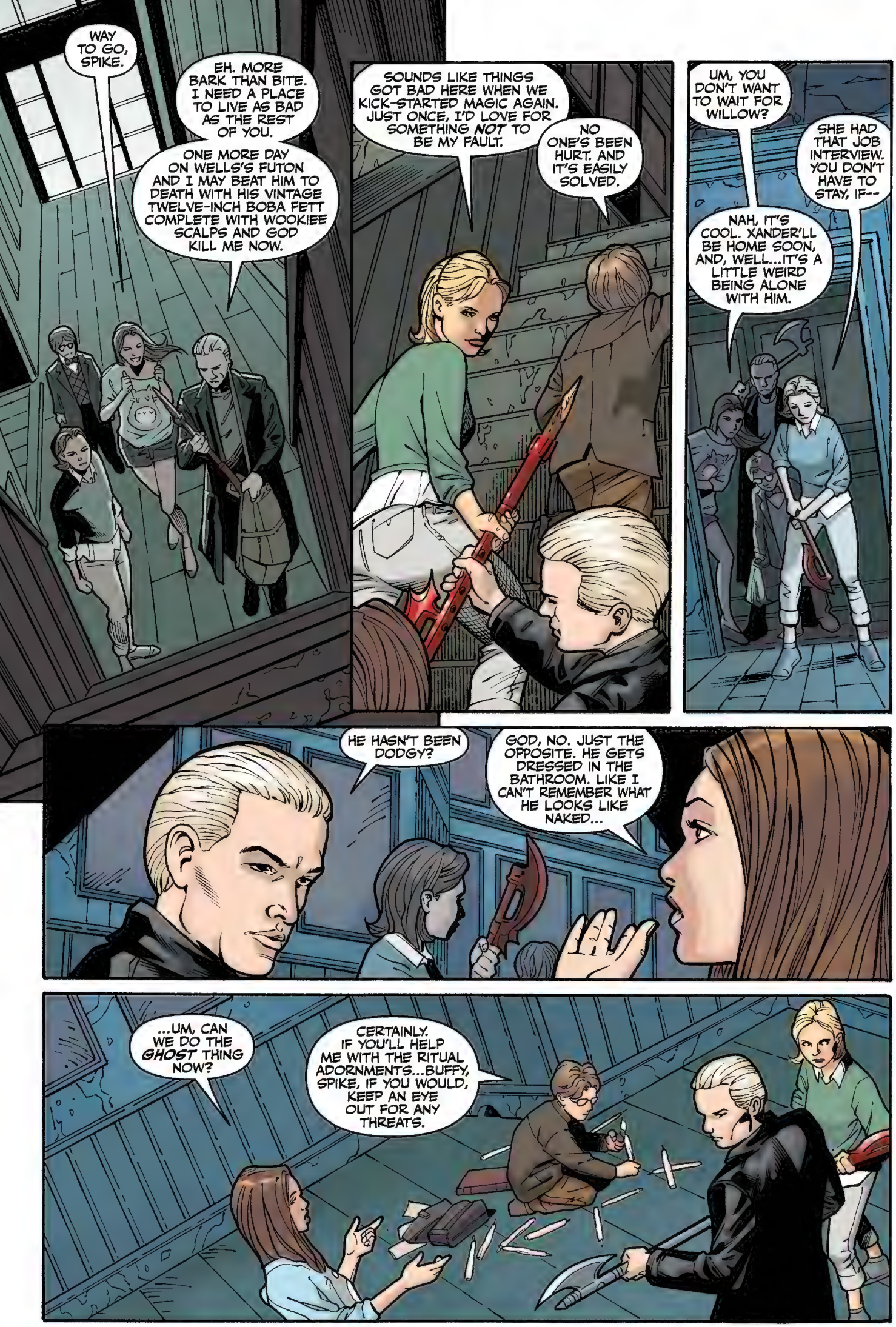

XANDER AND DAWN'S APARTMENT.
ARE YOU INSANE?
YOU GAVE NOTICE? BEFORE YOU FOUND NEW PLACES? DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT COSTS TO LIVE IN THIS TOWN? I DO...NOW.
WELL, I MEAN, IT'D BE KINDA WEIRD FOR US TO KEEP LIVING TOGETHER WHEN WE'RE... Y'KNOW, WORKING THINGS OUT.
I'VE GOT GOBS OF CONSTRUCTION WORK LINED UP. HOW EXPENSIVE CAN IT--
MIGHTY SARLACC!
I KNOW! AND IT'S LIKE SHARK WEEK OUT THERE. TUMBLE POSTED MY ROOM ON CLEM'S LIST AT NINE. BY TEN WE HAD AN ARMY OF HIPSTERS BEATING DOWN THE DOOR!
WAIT, I THOUGHT YOU MADE A SMALL FORTUNE AT THAT BODYGUARD JOB.
SMALL FORTUNE MET BIG STUDENT LOAN. BOTH GOT MUCH SMALLER. KEEPS THE WOLVES FROM THE GATE, BUT IF I'M GONNA BE A SLAYER FULL TIME, I GOTTA BUDGET.
WAIT! GILES! OUR WEALTHY ENGLISH SUGAR DA--UH, FRIEND! WE'VE GOT A BIT OF A PROBLEM...
YES, YOUR SHOUTING TENDS TO CARRY. BUT I'M AFRAID MY HOLDINGS ARE FAR FROM LIQUID AT THE MOMENT.
SHOCKINGLY ENOUGH, I'M HAVING TROUBLE CONVINCING THE BANKS THAT I AM A LEGALLY DEAD MIDDLE-AGED LIBRARIAN.


YOUR FRIEND DETECTIVE DOWLING IS TRYING TO HELP, BUT SUPERNATURAL ALTERATION IS A NEW AND NEBULOUS AREA OF THE LAW.
I'D HOPED RILEY COULD APPEAL TO HIS GOVERNMENT CONTACTS. UNFORTUNATELY, HE IS UNREACHABLE. A TOP-SECRET MISSION, I GATHER.
WE'RE ALL GONNA BE HOMELESS.
EVERYONE CALM DOWN. WE'VE GOT A MONTH TO FIGURE SOMETHING OUT. I CAN APPLY FOR ON-CAMPUS HOUSING... ANDREW, HOW'S RENT IN OAKLAND?
RISING! YOU GAVE NOTICE WITHOUT A NEW PLACE LOCKED DOWN? INTERESTING CHOICE.
IF I HAVE TO STAY WITH TUMBLE AND THE BROS MUCH LONGER THERE MIGHT BE NON-VAMPIRE STAKING.
I HAVE FUTONS.
ANDREW...LAST TIME I WAS UNCONSCIOUS AROUND YOU, I WOKE UP A PREGNANT ROBOT.
AH. YES. I CAN SEE HOW THAT WOULD LEAD TO UNRESOLVED TRUST ISSUES.
I'M, UH, SORRY--IF I HAVEN'T SAID IT LATELY.
YOU HAVE. LET'S NOT DWELL. BUT I NEED A LONG-TERM SOLUTION.
AH, THAT'S WILLOW. SHE'S HELPING ME DOCUMENT MY "DIGITAL TRAIL." EXCUSE ME, WE'RE MEETING DOWLING SHORTLY.
ASK HIM ABOUT SUDDEN VACANCIES. MAYBE THE COPS HAVE THE INSIDE SCOOP.


THEY GAVE NOTICE? WITHOUT LINING UP A NEW PLACE?
TO BE FAIR, I ALSO DIDN'T REALIZE THE IMPLICATIONS.
RENTS HERE ARE CRAZY PANTS. IF I DON'T FIND A JOB SOON, I'LL BE OUT ON THE STREET MYSELF.
BUFFY SAID YOU HAD A JOB. AS SHE PUT IT, "SOMETHING GROWN UP WITH PANTSUITS."
TURNS OUT THEY FROWN ON EMPLOYEES GOING WALKABOUT IN MYSTIC DIMENSIONS FOR WEEKS ON END. BUT I KNOW COMPUTERS. I'LL BE OKAY. I HOPE.
UH, I'VE BEEN LOOKING INTO YOUR PROBLEM. THE RE-AGING OPTION...
NO. RESURRECTION WAS QUITE ENOUGH, THANK YOU. I DON'T WISH TO BE MEDDLED WITH MAGICALLY ANY FURTHER.
GOOD. BECAUSE WHO YOU ARE NOW IS KINDA ALL TIED IN WITH YOUR RESURRECTION.
IF WE MESS WITH YOU, IT MIGHT UNRAVEL EVERYTHING...AND YOU COULD DIE.
AH. ALL THE MORE REASON THEN.
HA! I THOUGHT YOU'D BE UPSET. BUT I SHOULD'VE KNOWN.
YOU'RE GILES! YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT SUPERFICIAL STUFF. YOU KNOW IT'S WHO YOU ARE INSIDE THAT COUNTS.
YES. COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER MYSELF.

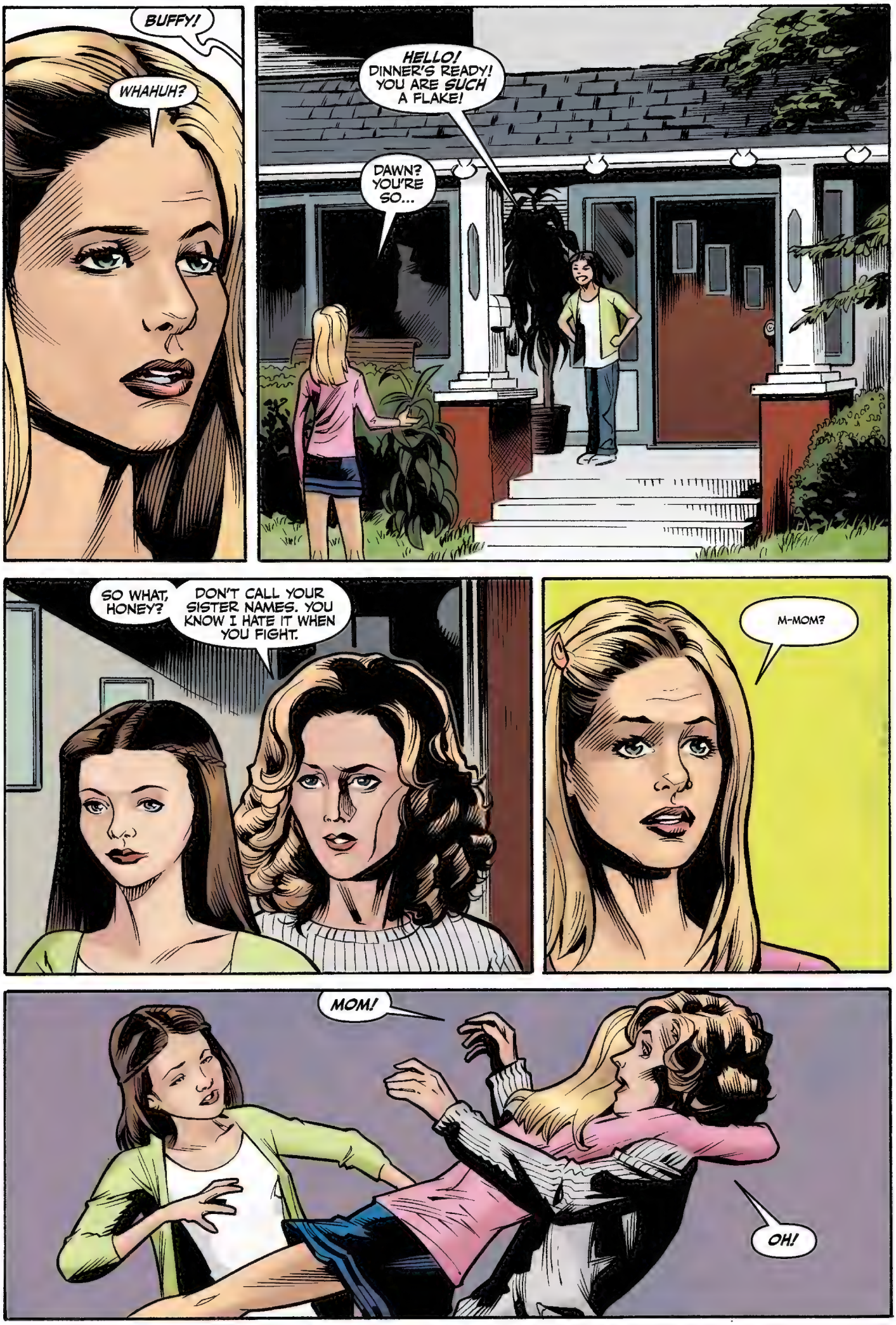

WE'VE GOT HIS ENTIRE LIFE HISTORY HERE, AND IT'S *STILL* NOT ENOUGH?
IT MIGHT BE... EVENTUALLY. THE COURTS ARE FIGURING IT OUT.
BUT I'LL BE HONEST--IT'S A MESS. SORRY. I REALLY WISH I COULD DO MORE.
NOT AT ALL. I'M GRATEFUL FOR YOUR HELP.
OH! I JUST THOUGHT OF A LEAD FOR YOUR *OTHER* PROBLEM. THIS LADY'S BEEN CALLING SUPERNATURAL CRIMES. WE CAN'T HELP HER--MAYBE YOU CAN.
SHE OWNS A BUILDING ON THE EDGE OF THE TENDERLOIN... WHAT USED TO BE A SKETCHY AREA, BUT IT'S GENTRIFYING. EXCEPT HER BUILDING... BECAUSE IT'S *HAUNTED.*
WE'RE A NEW DEPARTMENT. UNDERSTAFFED. WE HAVE TO PRIORITIZE CASES WHERE PEOPLE'S LIVES ARE IN DANGER.
THIS PLACE HAS A GRISLY HISTORY...*TWENTY-FIVE KIDS* DISAPPEARED OVER THREE DECADES. WE THINK A SERIAL KILLER MIGHT'VE BEEN ACTIVE THEN.
BUT LATELY, IT'S JUST SCARY SIGHTS AND SOUNDS, SO IT'S ON OUR BACK BURNER. THE LANDLADY'S DESPERATE. IF YOU CAN HELP, *THERE'S* YOUR VACANCY.
SOUNDS PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD. OLD CRIME SCENE... GHOSTS WHO CAN'T MOVE ON, LASHING OUT. THOSE POOR KIDS.
A SIMPLE EXORCISM. I'VE DONE DOZENS. WE CAN HELP THE DEPARTED, THE LIVING...AND *OURSELVES.*
THANK YOU, DETECTIVE. ALLOW ME TO BUY YOU ANOTHER STOUT. OH, *WAITER!*
LET ME. OR I MIGHT HAVE TO ARREST YOU.
YES, RIGHT.
BUGGER.

WHAT A COOL OLD BUILDING...!
COOL OLD HAUNTED BUILDING, DAWNIE. SO IF WE FIX IT, WE LIVE HERE FREE?
TRY CHEAP... FOR SAN FRANCISCO. FINAL OFFER. I CAN ALWAYS SELL IT TO A GERMAN HEDGE FUND. THEY DON'T KNOW FROM HAUNTING.
WE HAVE AN AGREEMENT, MADAM. WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE HISTORY?
NOT MUCH. INHERITED IT FROM MY DAD. HE RENTED TO IMMIGRANTS, MOSTLY.
I BEEN GOING UPSCALE. TECHIES, TRUST-FUND HIPPIES. AND IT WAS FINE UNTIL A FEW WEEKS AGO. THEN, WHAM! LIKE A HORROR FLICK.
AND THE, AH, SERIAL KILLER--
DON'T YOU SAY THAT. THEY NEVER FOUND BODIES. ASK ME, THE KIDS RAN AWAY. YOU KNOW WHAT THOSE PEOPLE ARE LIKE.
I'M AN IMMIGRANT. WHAT ARE WE LIKE?
LISTEN, MR. POLITICALLY CORRECT POLICE, I GOT OTHER BUILDINGS. SO EITHER FIX THIS ONE, AND WE GOT A DEAL... OR GET OUT OF MY HAIR.
AND SEE IF ANYONE ELSE IN THIS CITY WILL RENT TO A GANG OF WEIRDOS LIKE YOU.


WAY TO GO, SPIKE.
EH. MORE BARK THAN BITE. I NEED A PLACE TO LIVE AS BAD AS THE REST OF YOU.
ONE MORE DAY ON WELLS'S FUTON AND I MAY BEAT HIM TO DEATH WITH HIS VINTAGE TWELVE-INCH BOBA FETT COMPLETE WITH WOOKIEE SCALPS AND GOD KILL ME NOW.
SOUNDS LIKE THINGS GOT BAD HERE WHEN WE KICK-STARTED MAGIC AGAIN. JUST ONCE, I'D LOVE FOR SOMETHING *NOT* TO BE MY FAULT.
NO ONE'S BEEN HURT. AND IT'S EASILY SOLVED.
UM, YOU DON'T WANT TO WAIT FOR WILLOW?
SHE HAD THAT JOB INTERVIEW. YOU DON'T HAVE TO STAY, IF--
NAH, IT'S COOL. XANDER'LL BE HOME SOON, AND, WELL...IT'S A LITTLE WEIRD BEING ALONE WITH HIM.
HE HASN'T BEEN DODGY?
GOD, NO. JUST THE OPPOSITE. HE GETS DRESSED IN THE BATHROOM. LIKE I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE NAKED...
...UM, CAN WE DO THE *GHOST* THING NOW?
CERTAINLY. IF YOU'LL HELP ME WITH THE RITUAL ADORNMENTS...BUFFY, SPIKE, IF YOU WOULD, KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ANY THREATS.

BUT DON'T BE MEAN. THEY'RE SCARED LITTLE KID GHOSTS.
I SHALL CROON LULLABIES AS I BEAT THE ECTOPLASM OUT OF THEM, ALL RIGHT?
EXORCIZAMUS TE, OMNIS IMMUNDUS SPIRITUS--
UM, IS THAT AN EARTHQUAKE, OR--
BRMMM
KRABRAASHH
BLOODY HELL!

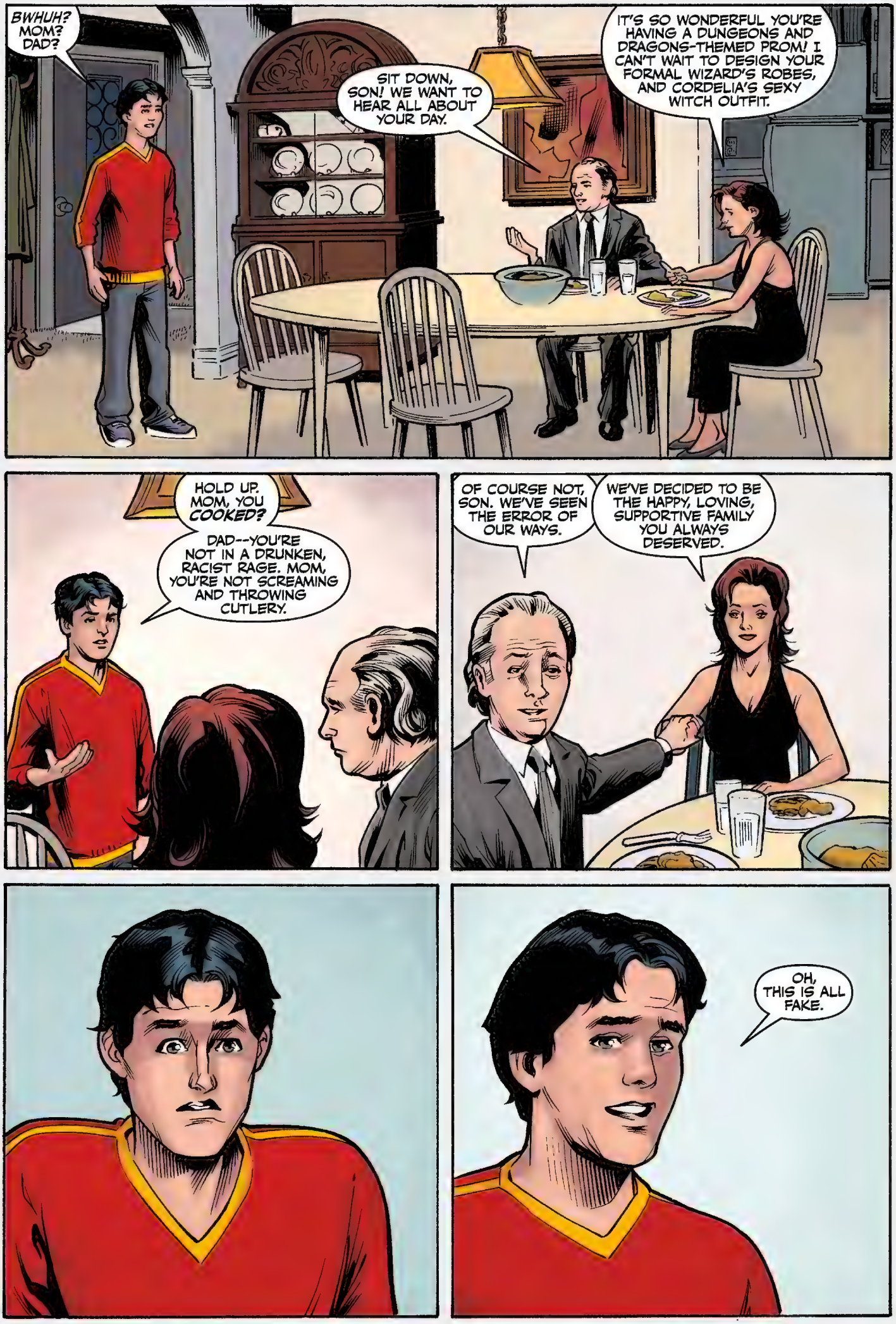
THIS DOES NOT LOOK LIKE A GHOST KID!
BETTER. SOMETHING I CAN SLICE UP.
NO! DON'T GET ANY OF ITS ICHOR ON YOU OR--
WHAT'S THAT NOW?
SHLUKK
DAWN!
BUFFY!
BUFFY...

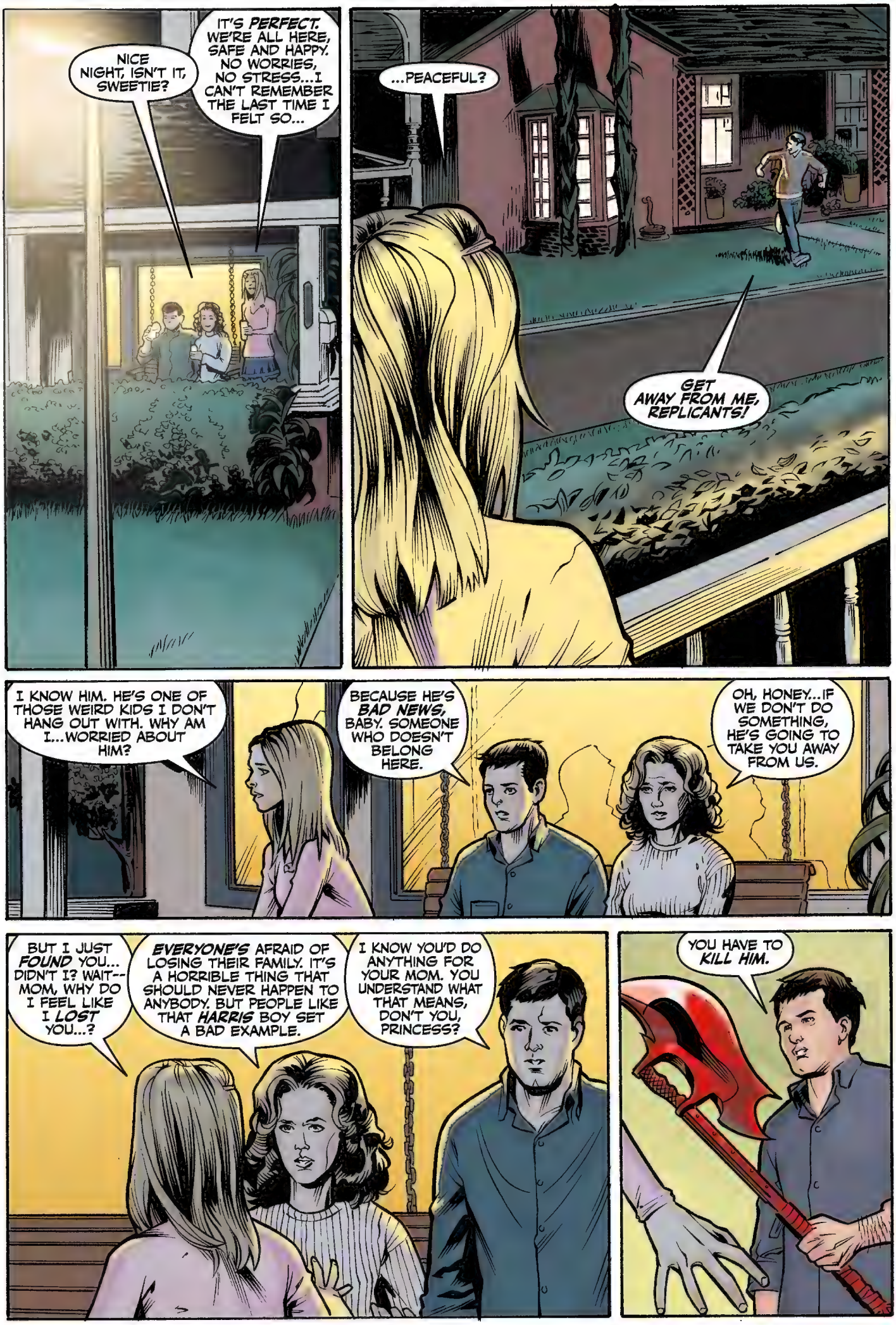

BUFFY!
WHAHUH?
HELLO! DINNER'S READY! YOU ARE SUCH A FLAKE!
DAWN? YOU'RE SO...
SO WHAT, HONEY?
DON'T CALL YOUR SISTER NAMES. YOU KNOW I HATE IT WHEN YOU FIGHT.
M-MOM?
MOM!
OH!

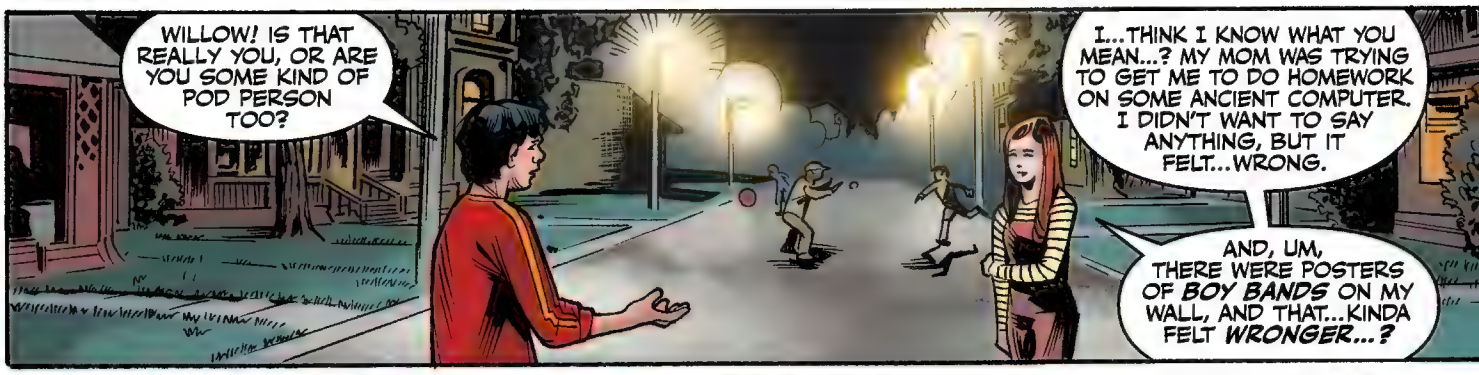
WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION?
DAD? YOU'RE HERE! MOM, YOU'RE-- WE'RE--
--WE'RE ALL TOGETHER?
KINDA HOW FAMILIES ARE SUPPOSED TO WORK, KIDDO.
WH-WHERE ARE WE?
NOW THAT'S A SILLY QUESTION.
WE'RE HOME.
WE'RE ALL HOME.

MIND YOURSELF, YOUNG MASTER GILES! GOT A NEW MODEL PLANE, HAVE WE?
IT'S A SPITFIRE. FATHER HELPED ME BUILD IT. TONIGHT WE'RE STARTING A BF-110 MESSERSCHMITT!
WELL, THAT'S JUST SMASHING. NO SCHOOL FOR YOU?
DON'T BE DAFT. NO ONE HAS TO GO TO SCHOOL UNLESS THEY WANT TO.
YES, QUITE RIGHT. HOW ODD. WHY WOULD I HAVE THOUGHT OTHERWISE...?
OH, WILLIAM!
I COULD USE A LIE-DOWN. READ ME ONE OF YOUR LOVELY POEMS, WILL YOU, BEFORE YOUR LOVESTRUCK LASSES COME COURTING?
OF COURSE, MOTHER. THERE'S NOTHING I'D LIKE MORE.
BUFFY? ARE YOU OKAY?
I JUST...I FEEL LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING I WAS SUPPOSED TO DO. SOMETHING I WAS... RESPONSIBLE FOR...
YOU'RE A TEENAGE GIRL. YOUR ONLY RESPONSIBILITIES ARE HOMEWORK AND CHEERLEADING. NOT A BAD LIFE, AM I RIGHT?
YEAH. YOU ARE. I'M JUST BEING SILLY.
WHO COMPLAINS ABOUT NOT HAVING ANY WORRIES?

CAN'T RAISE ANY OF 'EM. AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS 'CAUSE ALL WE CAN AFFORD ARE THESE CHEAP OFF-BRAND PHONES, BUT NOW I'M WORRIED.
THIS SERIAL KILLER WAS ACTIVE, LIKE, DECADES. MAYBE IT WAS A DEMON, OR--
I'M NOT SO SURE THERE WAS A SERIAL KILLER.
DOWLING SENT ME THE CASE FILES ON THE MISSING KIDS. THEY COULD'VE RUN AWAY. ALL WERE GOING THROUGH SOME KIND OF FAMILY TRAUMA.
ABUSE, ADDICTION, HOMELESSNESS, DIVORCE...
I WISH MY PARENTS HAD GOTTEN DIVORCED. BUT THEY FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR ME TO HAVE A STABLE ENVIRONMENT OF CONTINUOUS DRUNKEN ARGUMENTS.
THIS IS IT. CAN'T TELL IF ANYONE'S INSIDE... DOOR'S OPEN, THOUGH.
I'M PICKING UP...SOMETHING. A WEIRD ENERGY...NOT FROM THIS PLANE. LISTEN, I DID SOME RESEARCH, AND I'VE GOT A THEORY. THERE'S A SPECIFIC KIND OF DEMON--
HOLD ON, I HEARD A VOICE. DAWN?
XANDER, WAIT!
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S IN THERE...

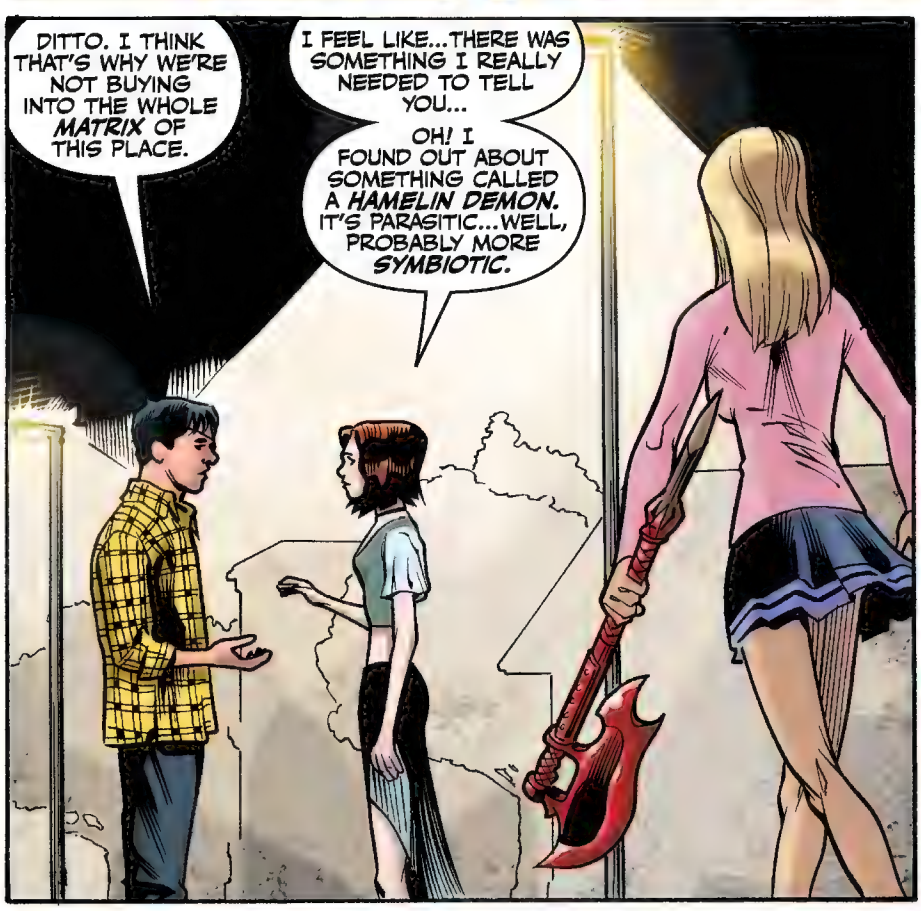

BWHUH? MOM? DAD?
SIT DOWN, SON! WE WANT TO HEAR ALL ABOUT YOUR DAY.
IT'S SO WONDERFUL YOU'RE HAVING A DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS-THEMED PROM! I CAN'T WAIT TO DESIGN YOUR FORMAL WIZARD'S ROBES, AND CORDELIA'S SEXY WITCH OUTFIT.
HOLD UP. MOM, YOU COOKED?
DAD--YOU'RE NOT IN A DRUNKEN, RACIST RAGE. MOM, YOU'RE NOT SCREAMING AND THROWING CUTLERY.
OF COURSE NOT, SON. WE'VE SEEN THE ERROR OF OUR WAYS.
WE'VE DECIDED TO BE THE HAPPY, LOVING, SUPPORTIVE FAMILY YOU ALWAYS DESERVED.
OH, THIS IS ALL FAKE.


NICE NIGHT, ISN'T IT, SWEETIE?
IT'S *PERFECT.* WE'RE ALL HERE, SAFE AND HAPPY. NO WORRIES, NO STRESS...I CAN'T REMEMBER THE LAST TIME I FELT SO...
...PEACEFUL?
GET AWAY FROM ME, REPLICANTS!
I KNOW HIM. HE'S ONE OF THOSE WEIRD KIDS I DON'T HANG OUT WITH. WHY AM I...WORRIED ABOUT HIM?
BECAUSE HE'S *BAD NEWS,* BABY. SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T BELONG HERE.
OH, HONEY...IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, HE'S GOING TO TAKE YOU AWAY FROM US.
BUT I JUST *FOUND* YOU... DIDN'T I? WAIT-- MOM, WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I *LOST* YOU...?
EVERYONE'S AFRAID OF LOSING THEIR FAMILY. IT'S A HORRIBLE THING THAT SHOULD NEVER HAPPEN TO ANYBODY. BUT PEOPLE LIKE THAT *HARRIS* BOY SET A BAD EXAMPLE.
I KNOW YOU'D DO ANYTHING FOR YOUR MOM. YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS, DON'T YOU, PRINCESS?
YOU HAVE TO *KILL HIM.*

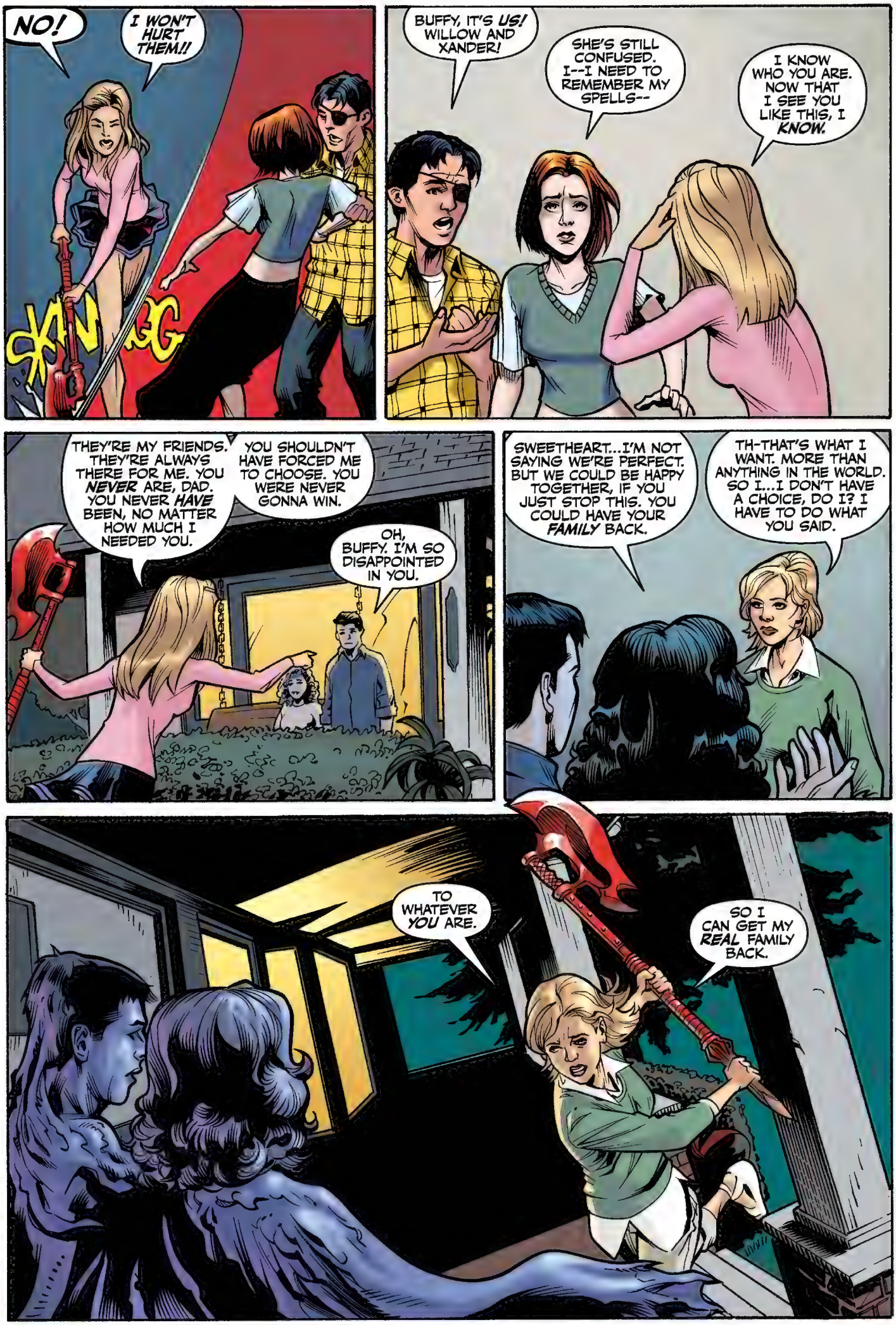

WILLOW! IS THAT REALLY YOU, OR ARE YOU SOME KIND OF POD PERSON TOO?
I...THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN...? MY MOM WAS TRYING TO GET ME TO DO HOMEWORK ON SOME ANCIENT COMPUTER. I DIDN'T WANT TO SAY ANYTHING, BUT IT FELT...WRONG.
AND, UM, THERE WERE POSTERS OF BOY BANDS ON MY WALL, AND THAT...KINDA FELT WRONGER...?

WELL, DUH. BECAUSE YOU'RE GAYER THAN GAY. AND WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING? IT'S BEEN A HELL OF A LONG TIME SINCE YOU WERE AFRAID TO SPEAK YOUR MIND.
IT HAS, HASN'T IT? AND YOU...IS SOMETHING MISSING FROM YOUR FACE? LIKE, RIGHT HERE...

MY EYE PATCH. I REMEMBER.
OKAY, I GET IT NOW. WE GOT RETCONNED BACK TO WHO WE WERE IN HIGH SCHOOL.
UGH! I MEAN, I LOVED A LOT ABOUT THOSE DAYS, BUT I REALLY DON'T MISS THEM.

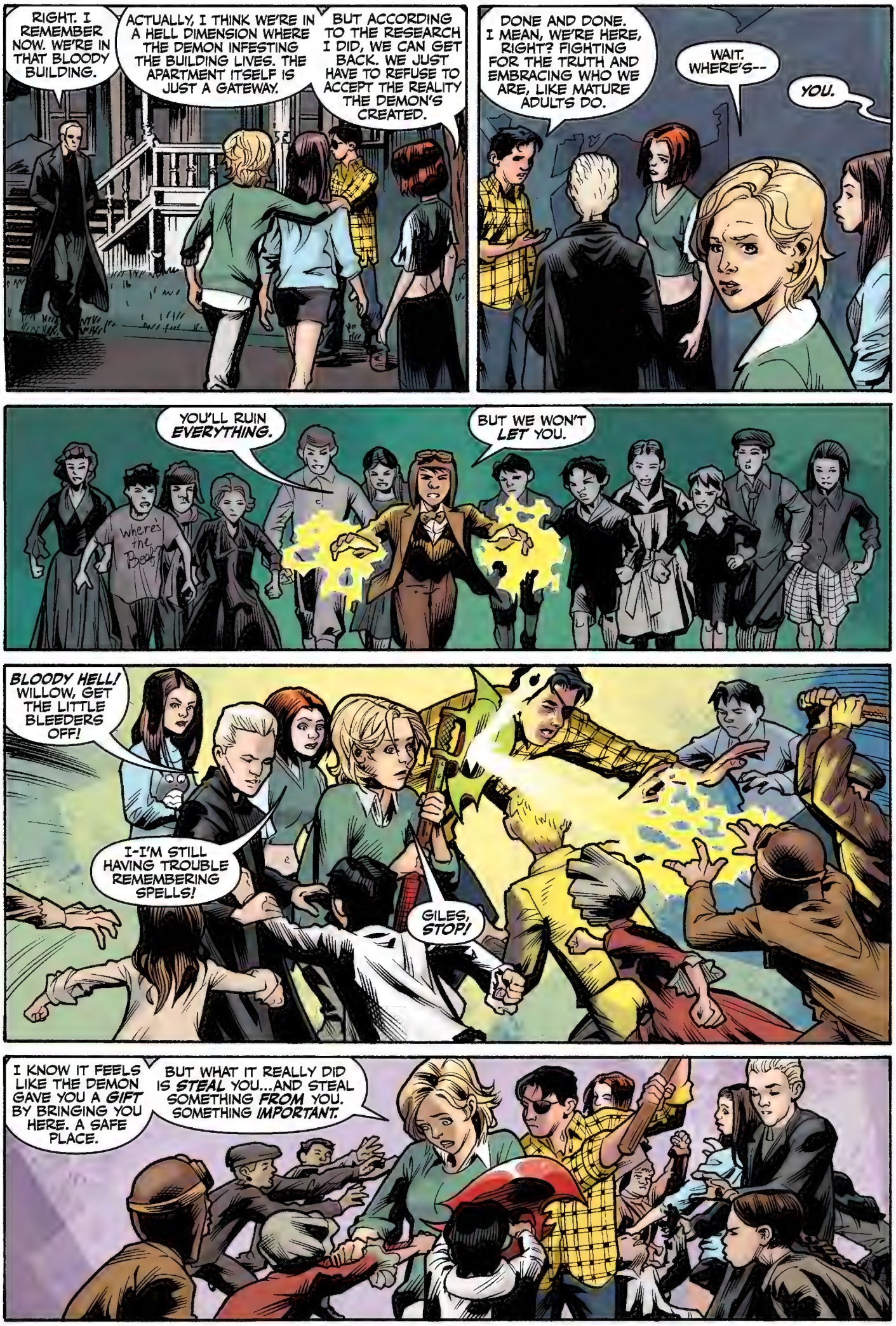

DITTO. I THINK THAT'S WHY WE'RE NOT BUYING INTO THE WHOLE MATRIX OF THIS PLACE.
I FEEL LIKE...THERE WAS SOMETHING I REALLY NEEDED TO TELL YOU...
OH! I FOUND OUT ABOUT SOMETHING CALLED A HAMELIN DEMON. IT'S PARASITIC...WELL, PROBABLY MORE SYMBIOTIC.

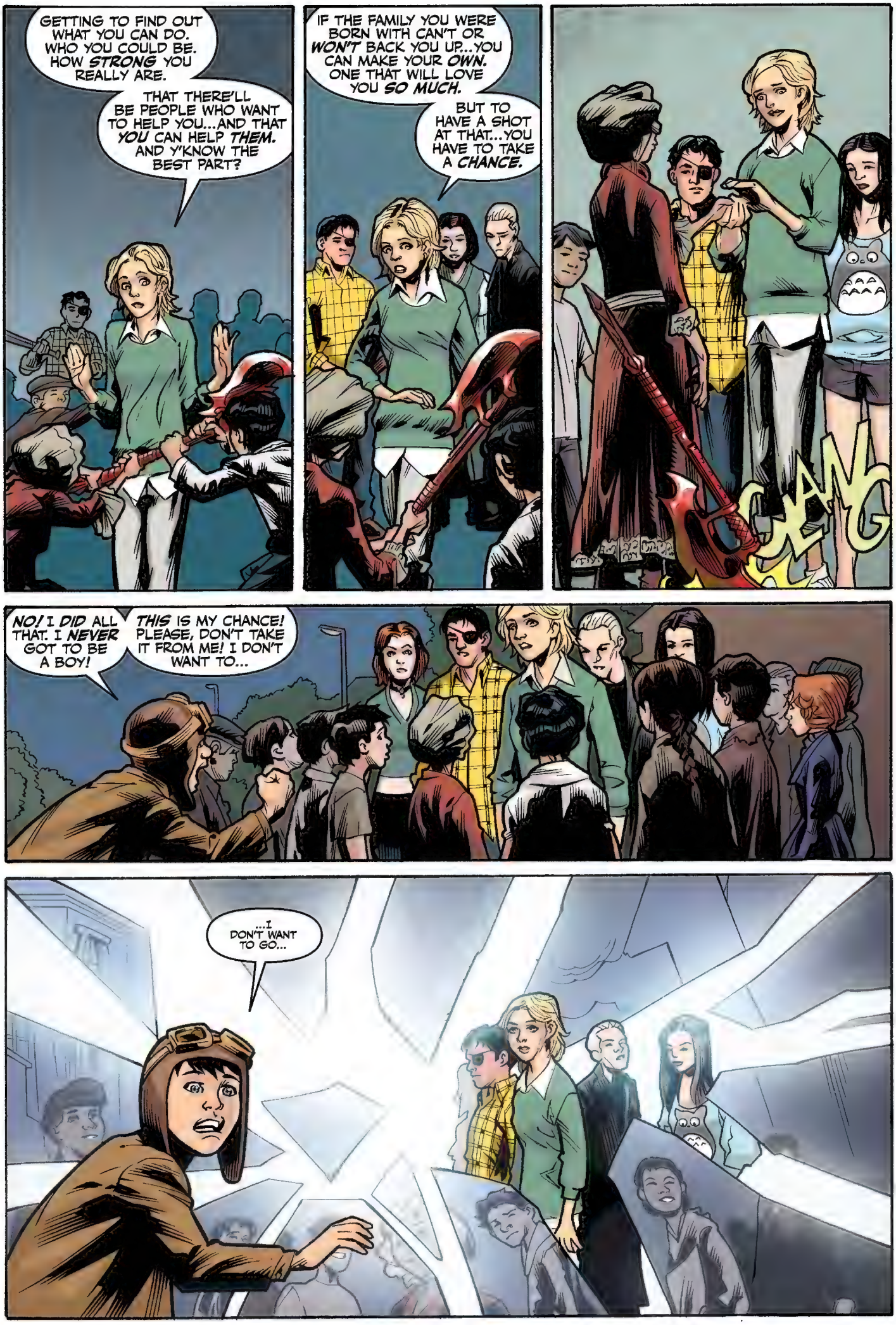
IT TARGETS KIDS WHO ARE ON THE VERGE OF LOSING THEIR CHILDHOOD--
WHAAA!


NO!
I WON'T HURT THEM!!
SKNGG
BUFFY, IT'S US! WILLOW AND XANDER!
SHE'S STILL CONFUSED. I--I NEED TO REMEMBER MY SPELLS--
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE. NOW THAT I SEE YOU LIKE THIS, I KNOW.
THEY'RE MY FRIENDS. THEY'RE ALWAYS THERE FOR ME. YOU NEVER ARE, DAD. YOU NEVER HAVE BEEN, NO MATTER HOW MUCH I NEEDED YOU.
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE FORCED ME TO CHOOSE. YOU WERE NEVER GONNA WIN.
OH, BUFFY. I'M SO DISAPPOINTED IN YOU.
SWEETHEART...I'M NOT SAYING WE'RE PERFECT. BUT WE COULD BE HAPPY TOGETHER, IF YOU JUST STOP THIS. YOU COULD HAVE YOUR FAMILY BACK.
TH-THAT'S WHAT I WANT. MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD. SO I...I DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, DO I? I HAVE TO DO WHAT YOU SAID.
TO WHATEVER YOU ARE.
SO I CAN GET MY REAL FAMILY BACK.

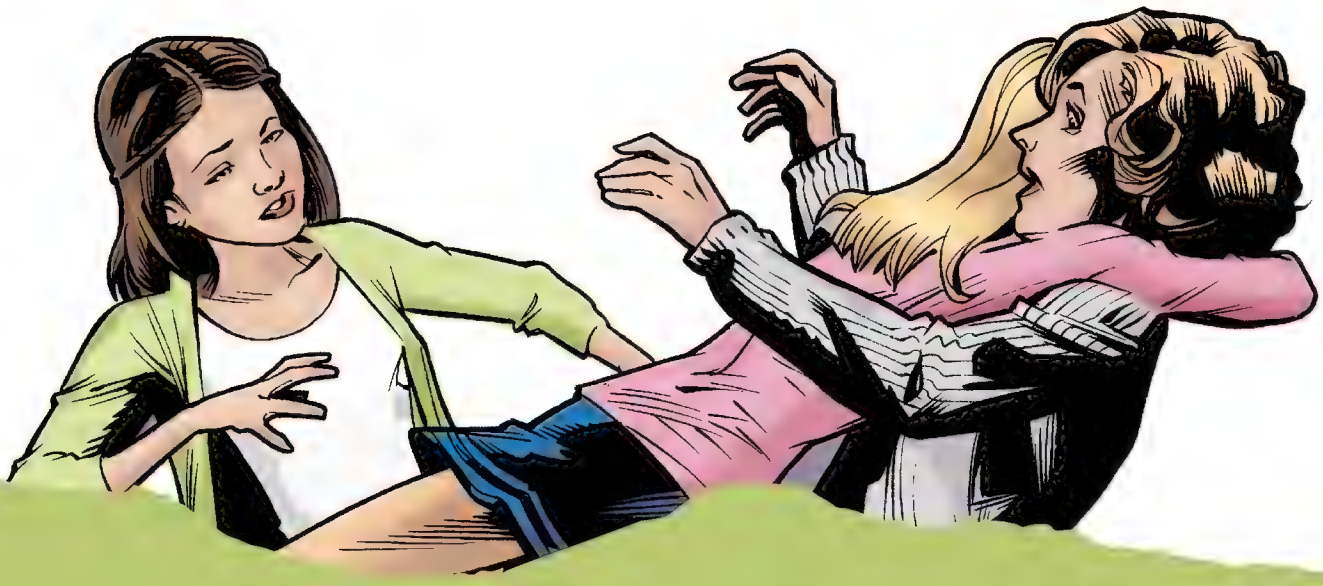
SON, BE A DEAR AND CLOSE THE CURTAINS. I CAN'T HEAR YOUR POETRY OVER THAT INFERNAL RACKET.
JUST A MOMENT, MUM. THAT BLOND GIRL, I FEEL AS IF SHE'S... *IMPORTANT.*
YOU AND YOUR GIRLS. YOU MOON OVER LITTLE TARTS WHO DON'T DESERVE YOUR LOVE, AND THEY BREAK YOUR HEART, DON'T THEY? YOU DON'T *NEED* THEM. JUST ME.
THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU USED TO SAY. YOU *ADORED* MY LOVE POEMS. YOU SAID IT'S ALL THAT MATTERS. THAT I'D FIND THE ONE SOMEDAY, AND WE'D BE HAPPY.
MOTHER, I LOOK AT HER, AND I THINK--
STUFF AND *NONSENSE.* I INSIST YOU COME AWAY FROM THERE *THIS INSTANT,* AND I WILL BROOK NO DISOBEDIENCE!
D-DON'T BE CROSS WITH ME, MUM. IT'S UNLIKE YOU. IT'S *UGLY.* MAKES ME THINK OF...
"...BAD THINGS..."
YEAH. BAD THINGS.
WE'RE *ALL* BAD THINGS, AREN'T WE?

WILLIAM! THIS IS NOT HOW I RAISED YOU!
NO. YOU CODDLED ME. FILLED MY HEAD WITH IMPOSSIBLE DREAMS. MADE ME WEAK. SET ME UP FOR THE WORLD TO CRUSH ME.
I HAD TO BE STRONG TO SURVIVE! I HAD TO CHANGE!
IT'S YOUR FAULT I'M LIKE THIS!
Y-YOU'RE NOT MY MUM...
YOU'RE NOT MY MUM.
DAWN, WE'RE YOUR PARENTS! HELP US!
N-NO. BUFFY'S RIGHT. YOU'RE FAKE. THIS IS ALL FAKE.
I'M DONE PRETENDING. I WANT WHAT'S REAL.
EVEN IF IT HURTS.


RIGHT. I REMEMBER NOW. WE'RE IN THAT BLOODY BUILDING.
ACTUALLY, I THINK WE'RE IN A HELL DIMENSION WHERE THE DEMON INFESTING THE BUILDING LIVES. THE APARTMENT ITSELF IS JUST A GATEWAY.
BUT ACCORDING TO THE RESEARCH I DID, WE CAN GET BACK. WE JUST HAVE TO REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE REALITY THE DEMON'S CREATED.
DONE AND DONE. I MEAN, WE'RE HERE, RIGHT? FIGHTING FOR THE TRUTH AND EMBRACING WHO WE ARE, LIKE MATURE ADULTS DO.
WAIT. WHERE'S--
YOU.
YOU'LL RUIN EVERYTHING.
BUT WE WON'T LET YOU.
Where's the Beef?
BLOODY HELL! WILLOW, GET THE LITTLE BLEEDERS OFF!
I-I'M STILL HAVING TROUBLE REMEMBERING SPELLS!
GILES, STOP!
I KNOW IT FEELS LIKE THE DEMON GAVE YOU A GIFT BY BRINGING YOU HERE. A SAFE PLACE.
BUT WHAT IT REALLY DID IS STEAL YOU...AND STEAL SOMETHING FROM YOU. SOMETHING IMPORTANT.

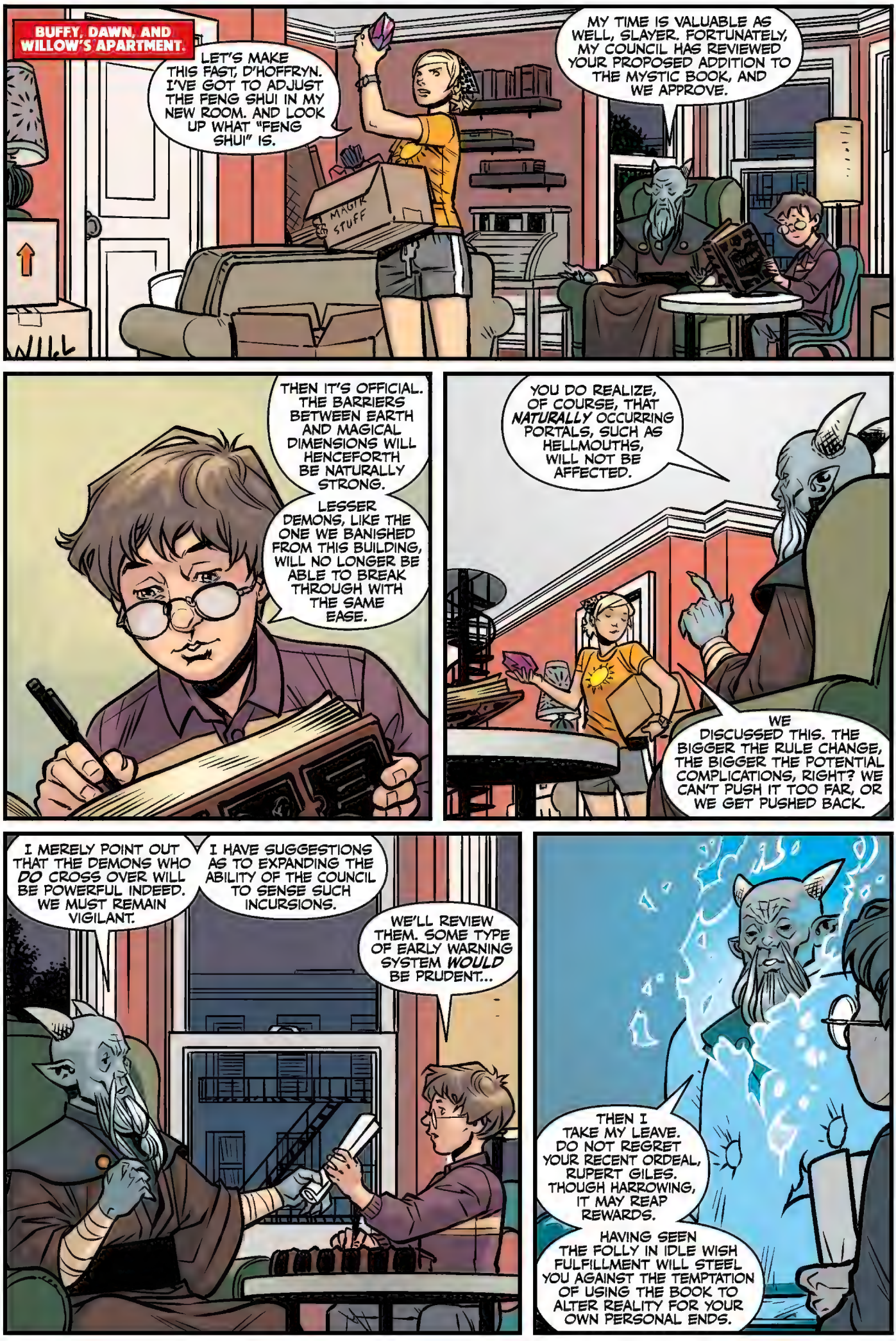

GETTING TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU CAN DO. WHO YOU COULD BE. HOW *STRONG* YOU REALLY ARE.
THAT THERE'LL BE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO HELP YOU...AND THAT *YOU* CAN HELP *THEM.* AND Y'KNOW THE BEST PART?
IF THE FAMILY YOU WERE BORN WITH CAN'T OR *WON'T* BACK YOU UP...YOU CAN MAKE YOUR *OWN.* ONE THAT WILL LOVE YOU *SO MUCH.*
BUT TO HAVE A SHOT AT THAT...YOU HAVE TO TAKE A *CHANCE.*
CLANG
NO! I *DID* ALL THAT. I *NEVER* GOT TO BE A BOY!
THIS IS MY CHANCE! PLEASE, DON'T TAKE IT FROM ME! I DON'T WANT TO...
...I DON'T WANT TO GO...

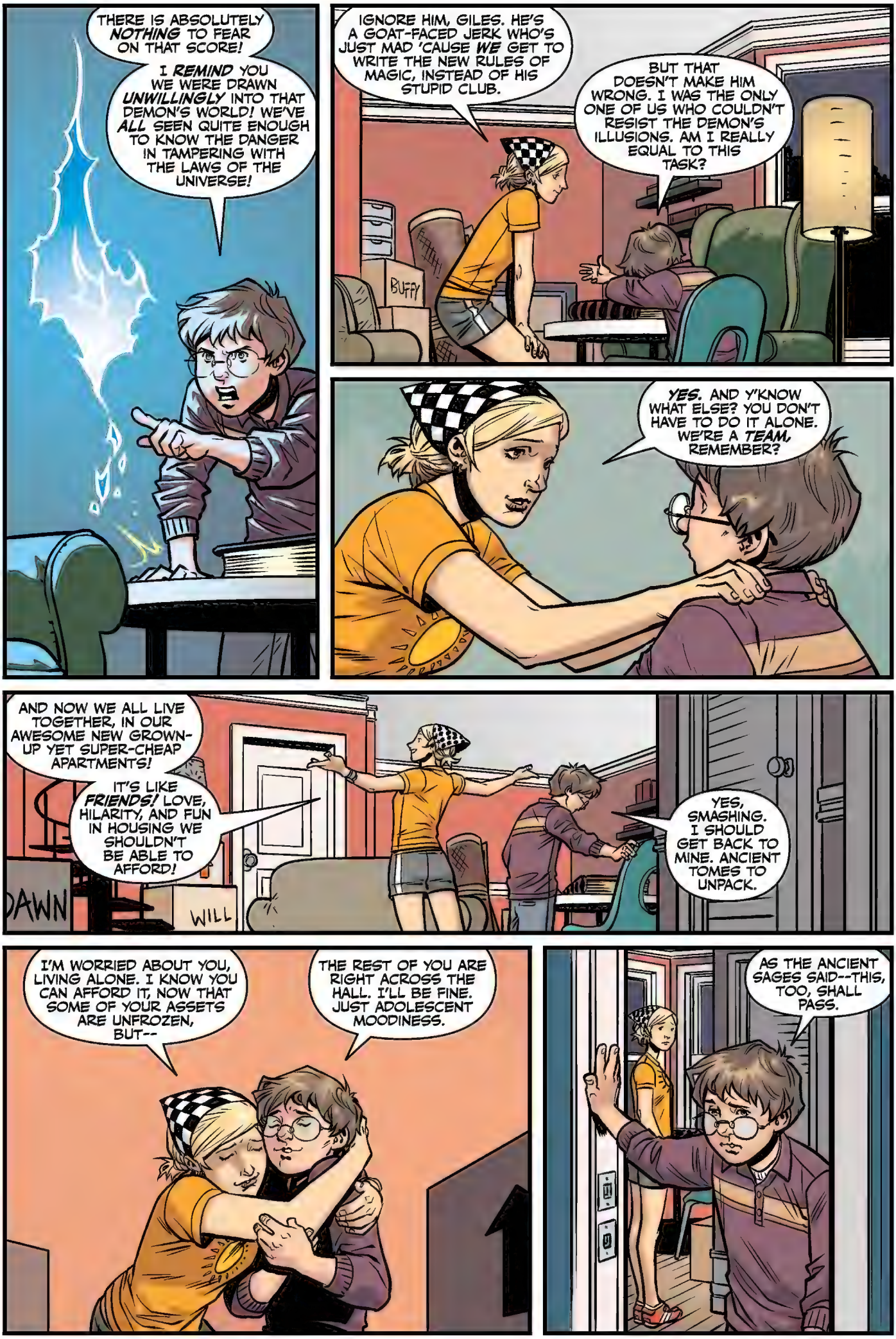
LATER.
DOWLING SAYS MOST OF THE KIDS HAVE SURVIVING FAMILY. WITH THE NEWS COVERAGE THEY'RE ALREADY GETTING, THEIR FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT. HE'S KEEPING US OUT OF IT.
THANK HEAVEN FOR SMALL FAVORS.
STEADY ON, LITTLE MAN. WHAT HAPPENED IN THAT DREAM WORLD DON'T MEAN A THING. UH, ISN'T THAT RIGHT, RED?
TOTALLY. YOU CAN'T BEAT YOURSELF UP. YOU WERE UNDER THE DEMON'S INFLUENCE.
AND THE ONLY ONE WHO COULDN'T SHRUG IT OFF.
I WAS DENIED A PROPER CHILDHOOD WHEN FATHER SENT ME TO WATCHER ACADEMY. IT SEEMS I NEVER TRULY ACKNOWLEDGED HOW MUCH THAT MARKED ME.
I SUPPOSE I'LL NEED TO LEARN NEW WAYS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH FEELINGS I SUPPRESSED THE FIRST TIME AROUND.
YES. AND QUICKLY.
FOR WITH MAGIC RETURNED, THE BARRIERS BETWEEN WORLDS ARE WEAKENED. WISDOM IS REQUIRED TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO PREVENT AN INCURSION OF--
HEY. D'HOFFRYN. SOME OF US HAVE SOULS, AND WE'VE JUST HAD 'EM STOMPED ON, SO TELL YOUR MAGIC COUNCIL WE'RE GONNA NEED SOME TIME--
NO. IT'S FINE.
AFTER ALL...WILL ANYTHING TRULY BE DIFFERENT TOMORROW?



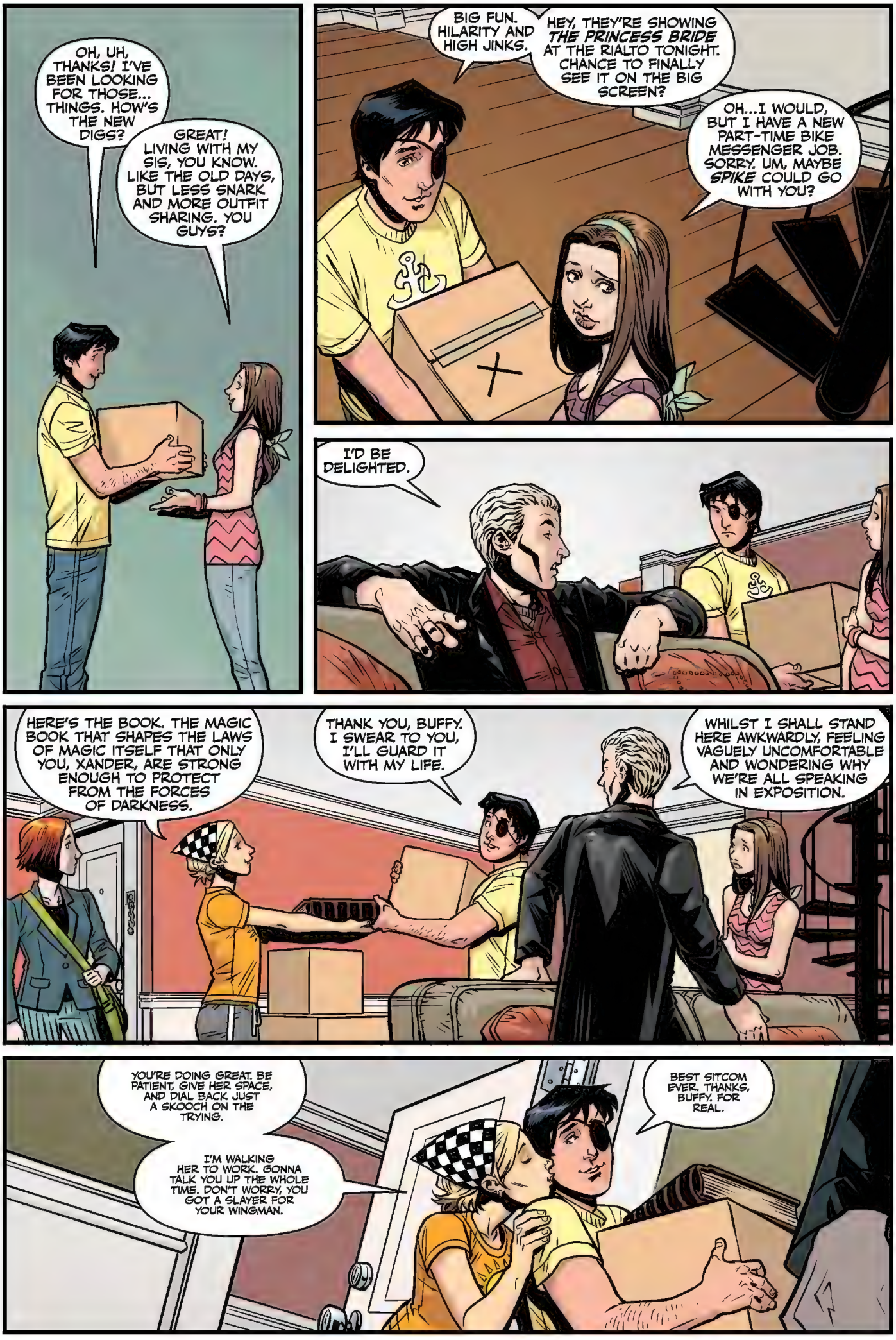
THESE ARE ALL SOAP OPERA DIGESTS? HOW COULD ANYONE POSSIBLY NEED SO MANY?
THERE WERE OVER TWO THOUSAND EPISODES OF PASSIONS. THAT'S AN ESSENTIAL REFERENCE LIBRARY. AT LEAST I USE 'EM... UNLIKE YOUR DOLLS.
MAQUETTES ARE NOT DOLLS! THEY'RE LIMITED-EDITION WORKS OF SCULPTURE THAT YOU ARE BEING CRIMINALLY RECKLESS WITH!
THEY'RE OVERRUNNING THE BLOODY APARTMENT, IS WHAT THEY ARE!
I'M GONNA SEEM A RIGHT TOSSER LIVING HERE! I MEAN, LOOK AT THIS PLACE!
BAM
I WISH
PART TWO

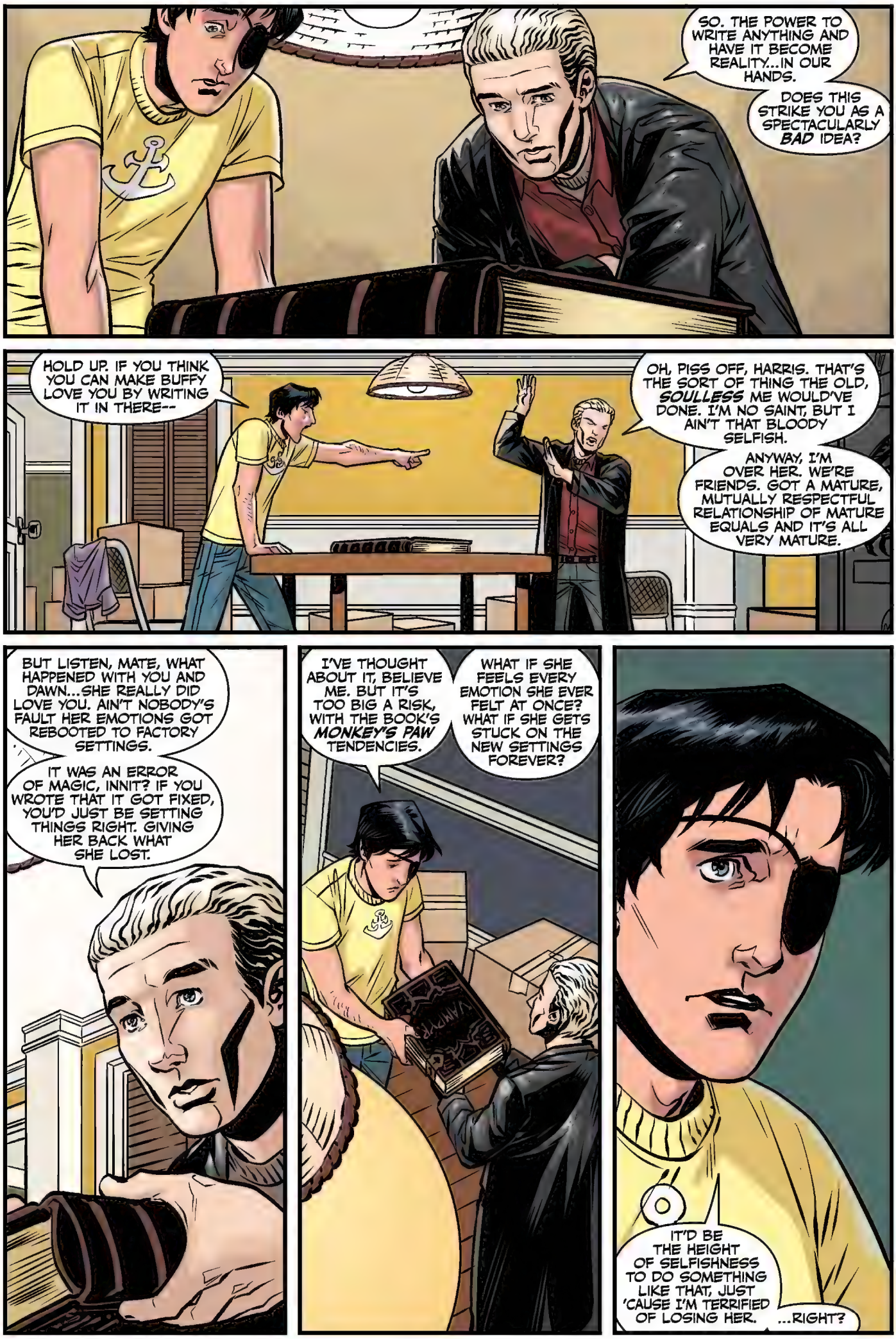
COMIC BOOKS, VIDEO GAMES, DOLLS--PARDON, "MAQUETTES"--WITH NARY A SURFACE UNCOVERED. IT'S HARDLY AN EQUITABLE DIVISION OF REAL ESTATE.
I'D REMIND YOU THAT I PAID THE ENTIRE SECURITY DEPOSIT AND MOST OF THE RENT. I'M NOT YOUR SUGAR DADDY. ARE YOU PLANNING ON EVER GETTING A *JOB?*
BIT OF A CHALLENGE, THAT. NO SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, CAN'T WORK DAYTIME SHIFTS, HUNDRED-YEAR GAP IN MY RESUME...
WELL, HOW DO VAMPIRES SUPPORT THEMSELVES? I MEAN, YOU GOTTA KEEP RENFIELD IN FLIES, RIGHT?
WE ROB OUR KILLS, TRADITIONALLY. BUT I'VE GOT THIS ANNOYING *SOUL* NOW, MAKES THAT A MITE DIFFICULT.
I SUPPOSE I COULD BE A VIGILANTE. JUST KILL FOLKS WHO DESERVE IT. LIKE CHILD MOLESTERS AND PEOPLE WHO TALK DURING MOVIES.
YOU CAN BE MY SIDEKICK, "THE WHITE WANKER."
I FORGOT THE DOWNSIDE OF SHARING A PLACE WITH YOU. THE WHOLE "SHARING A PLACE WITH YOU" PART.
YOU SHOULD TALK TO DOWLING. I BET THE *SUPERNATURAL CRIMES UNIT* COULD USE A CONSULTANT ON VAMPIRE BEHAVIOR.
"VAMPIRE BEHAVIOR"? WE ARE NOT A MONOLITHIC BLOC OF SHEEP, YOU LIFE-IST SON OF A--
XANDER
Y'KNOW, THAT AIN'T A BAD IDEA. WONDER IF I CAN GET A BADGE AND GUN?
ON SECOND THOUGHT, LET'S GO ACROSS THE HALL AND SEE HOW THE GIRLS ARE DOING.

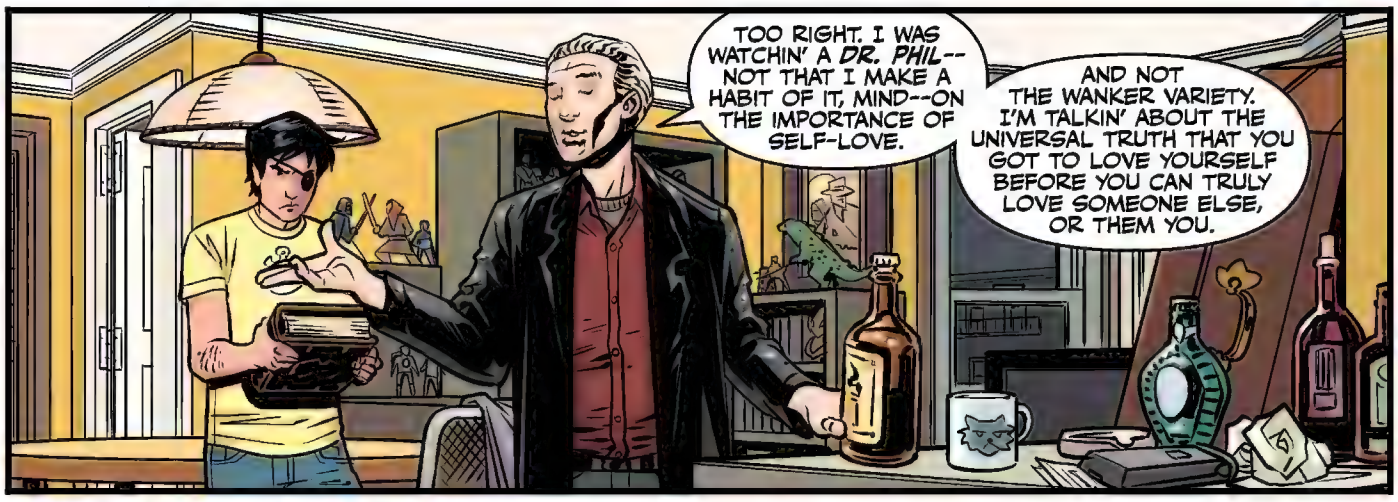

BUFFY, DAWN, AND WILLOW'S APARTMENT.
LET'S MAKE THIS FAST, D'HOFFRYN. I'VE GOT TO ADJUST THE FENG SHUI IN MY NEW ROOM. AND LOOK UP WHAT "FENG SHUI" IS.
MAGIK STUFF
MY TIME IS VALUABLE AS WELL, SLAYER. FORTUNATELY, MY COUNCIL HAS REVIEWED YOUR PROPOSED ADDITION TO THE MYSTIC BOOK, AND WE APPROVE.
THEN IT'S OFFICIAL. THE BARRIERS BETWEEN EARTH AND MAGICAL DIMENSIONS WILL HENCEFORTH BE NATURALLY STRONG.
LESSER DEMONS, LIKE THE ONE WE BANISHED FROM THIS BUILDING, WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO BREAK THROUGH WITH THE SAME EASE.
YOU DO REALIZE, OF COURSE, THAT NATURALLY OCCURRING PORTALS, SUCH AS HELLMOUTHS, WILL NOT BE AFFECTED.
WE DISCUSSED THIS. THE BIGGER THE RULE CHANGE, THE BIGGER THE POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS, RIGHT? WE CAN'T PUSH IT TOO FAR, OR WE GET PUSHED BACK.
I MERELY POINT OUT THAT THE DEMONS WHO DO CROSS OVER WILL BE POWERFUL INDEED. WE MUST REMAIN VIGILANT.
I HAVE SUGGESTIONS AS TO EXPANDING THE ABILITY OF THE COUNCIL TO SENSE SUCH INCURSIONS.
WE'LL REVIEW THEM. SOME TYPE OF EARLY WARNING SYSTEM WOULD BE PRUDENT...
THEN I TAKE MY LEAVE. DO NOT REGRET YOUR RECENT ORDEAL, RUPERT GILES. THOUGH HARROWING, IT MAY REAP REWARDS.
HAVING SEEN THE FOLLY IN IDLE WISH FULFILLMENT WILL STEEL YOU AGAINST THE TEMPTATION OF USING THE BOOK TO ALTER REALITY FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL ENDS.

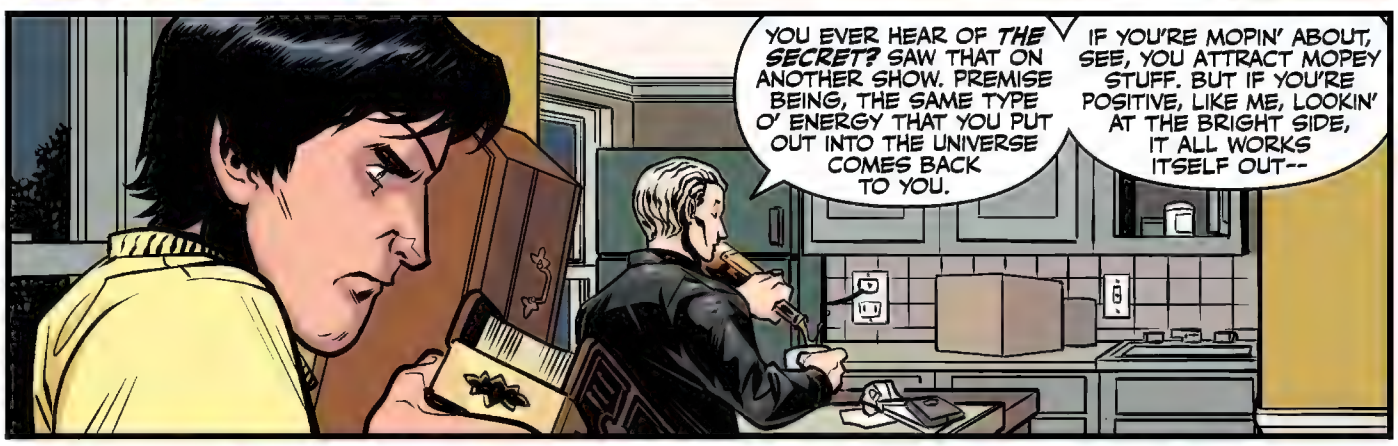

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO FEAR ON THAT SCORE!
I REMIND YOU WE WERE DRAWN UNWILLINGLY INTO THAT DEMON'S WORLD! WE'VE ALL SEEN QUITE ENOUGH TO KNOW THE DANGER IN TAMPERING WITH THE LAWS OF THE UNIVERSE!
IGNORE HIM, GILES. HE'S A GOAT-FACED JERK WHO'S JUST MAD 'CAUSE WE GET TO WRITE THE NEW RULES OF MAGIC, INSTEAD OF HIS STUPID CLUB.
BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE HIM WRONG. I WAS THE ONLY ONE OF US WHO COULDN'T RESIST THE DEMON'S ILLUSIONS. AM I REALLY EQUAL TO THIS TASK?
BUFFY
YES. AND Y'KNOW WHAT ELSE? YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE. WE'RE A TEAM, REMEMBER?
AND NOW WE ALL LIVE TOGETHER, IN OUR AWESOME NEW GROWN-UP YET SUPER-CHEAP APARTMENTS!
IT'S LIKE FRIENDS! LOVE, HILARITY, AND FUN IN HOUSING WE SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO AFFORD!
YES, SMASHING. I SHOULD GET BACK TO MINE. ANCIENT TOMES TO UNPACK.
DAWN
WILL
I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU, LIVING ALONE. I KNOW YOU CAN AFFORD IT, NOW THAT SOME OF YOUR ASSETS ARE UNFROZEN, BUT--
THE REST OF YOU ARE RIGHT ACROSS THE HALL. I'LL BE FINE. JUST ADOLESCENT MOODINESS.
AS THE ANCIENT SAGES SAID--THIS, TOO, SHALL PASS.

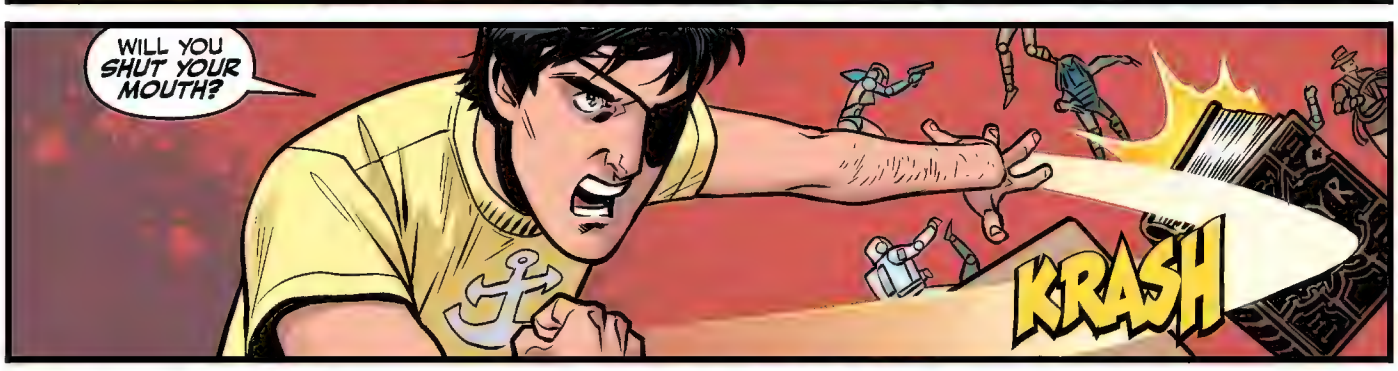
HEY! I WAS JUST TELLING THE GUYS, I GOT THE SECURITY SPELLS ALL SET UP ON THEIR PLACE.
OURS IS GOING TO TAKE LONGER, BECAUSE IT'S WHERE THE DEMON FIRST CROSSED OVER, SO I'VE GOTTA HIT IT WITH EXTRA MOJO. BUT I'VE GOT JOB INTERVIEWS.
I'M THINKING MAYBE WE KEEP THE BOOK AT THEIR PLACE UNTIL THIS ONE'S LOCKED DOWN.
FINE BY ME, IF THE BOYS DON'T MIND.
GREAT IDEA. EVEN IF THE BAD GUYS GET IN, THEY'LL NEVER MAKE IT PAST THE PROTECTIVE ODOR FIELD FROM SPIKE'S RANCID LAUNDRY.
OR THE AURA OF STALE VIRGINITY EMANATING FROM HARRIS'S METICULOUSLY CATALOGUED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS CARDS.
MAGIC CARDS! DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS MODULES! COMPLETELY DIFFERENT THINGS!
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS CARDS ARE A CHEAP DUMBING DOWN OF THE CONCEPT FOR PEOPLE TOO LAZY TO PUT IN THE TIME TO COMPREHEND THE MAGNIFICENT JEWEL THAT IS THE ORIGINAL GARY GYGAX SYSTEM--
--AND I JUST LOST THE ARGUMENT, DIDN'T I?
OH, HEY...
XANDER, I TOOK SOME OF YOUR STUFF BY MISTAKE.


OH, UH, THANKS! I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR THOSE... THINGS. HOW'S THE NEW DIGS?
GREAT! LIVING WITH MY SIS, YOU KNOW. LIKE THE OLD DAYS, BUT LESS SNARK AND MORE OUTFIT SHARING. YOU GUYS?
BIG FUN. HILARITY AND HIGH JINKS.
HEY, THEY'RE SHOWING *THE PRINCESS BRIDE* AT THE RIALTO TONIGHT. CHANCE TO FINALLY SEE IT ON THE BIG SCREEN?
OH...I WOULD, BUT I HAVE A NEW PART-TIME BIKE MESSENGER JOB. SORRY. UM, MAYBE *SPIKE* COULD GO WITH YOU?
I'D BE DELIGHTED.
HERE'S THE BOOK. THE MAGIC BOOK THAT SHAPES THE LAWS OF MAGIC ITSELF THAT ONLY YOU, XANDER, ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO PROTECT FROM THE FORCES OF DARKNESS.
THANK YOU, BUFFY. I SWEAR TO YOU, I'LL GUARD IT WITH MY LIFE.
WHILST I SHALL STAND HERE AWKWARDLY, FEELING VAGUELY UNCOMFORTABLE AND WONDERING WHY WE'RE ALL SPEAKING IN EXPOSITION.
YOU'RE DOING GREAT. BE PATIENT, GIVE HER SPACE, AND DIAL BACK JUST A SKOOCH ON THE TRYING.
I'M WALKING HER TO WORK. GONNA TALK YOU UP THE WHOLE TIME. DON'T WORRY, YOU GOT A SLAYER FOR YOUR WINGMAN.
BEST SITCOM EVER. THANKS, BUFFY. FOR REAL.

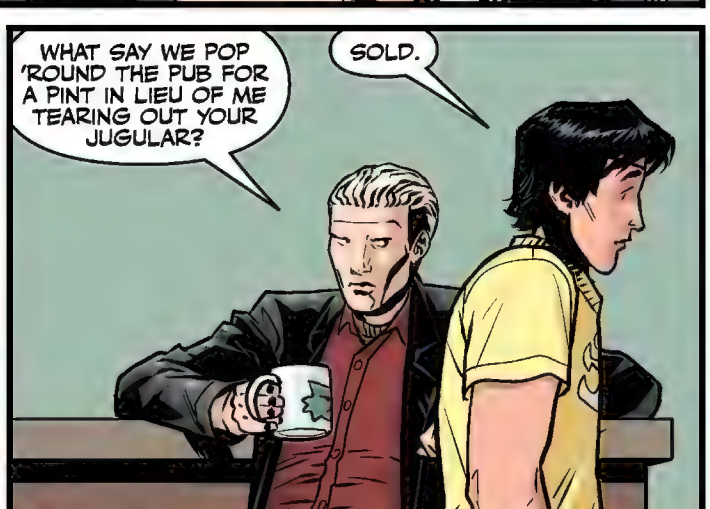

SO. THE POWER TO WRITE ANYTHING AND HAVE IT BECOME REALITY...IN OUR HANDS.
DOES THIS STRIKE YOU AS A SPECTACULARLY BAD IDEA?
HOLD UP. IF YOU THINK YOU CAN MAKE BUFFY LOVE YOU BY WRITING IT IN THERE--
OH, PISS OFF, HARRIS. THAT'S THE SORT OF THING THE OLD, SOULLESS ME WOULD'VE DONE. I'M NO SAINT, BUT I AIN'T THAT BLOODY SELFISH.
ANYWAY, I'M OVER HER. WE'RE FRIENDS. GOT A MATURE, MUTUALLY RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIP OF MATURE EQUALS AND IT'S ALL VERY MATURE.
BUT LISTEN, MATE, WHAT HAPPENED WITH YOU AND DAWN...SHE REALLY DID LOVE YOU. AIN'T NOBODY'S FAULT HER EMOTIONS GOT REBOOTED TO FACTORY SETTINGS.
IT WAS AN ERROR OF MAGIC, INNIT? IF YOU WROTE THAT IT GOT FIXED, YOU'D JUST BE SETTING THINGS RIGHT. GIVING HER BACK WHAT SHE LOST.
I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT, BELIEVE ME. BUT IT'S TOO BIG A RISK, WITH THE BOOK'S MONKEY'S PAW TENDENCIES.
WHAT IF SHE FEELS EVERY EMOTION SHE EVER FELT AT ONCE? WHAT IF SHE GETS STUCK ON THE NEW SETTINGS FOREVER?
IT'D BE THE HEIGHT OF SELFISHNESS TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT, JUST 'CAUSE I'M TERRIFIED OF LOSING HER.
...RIGHT?

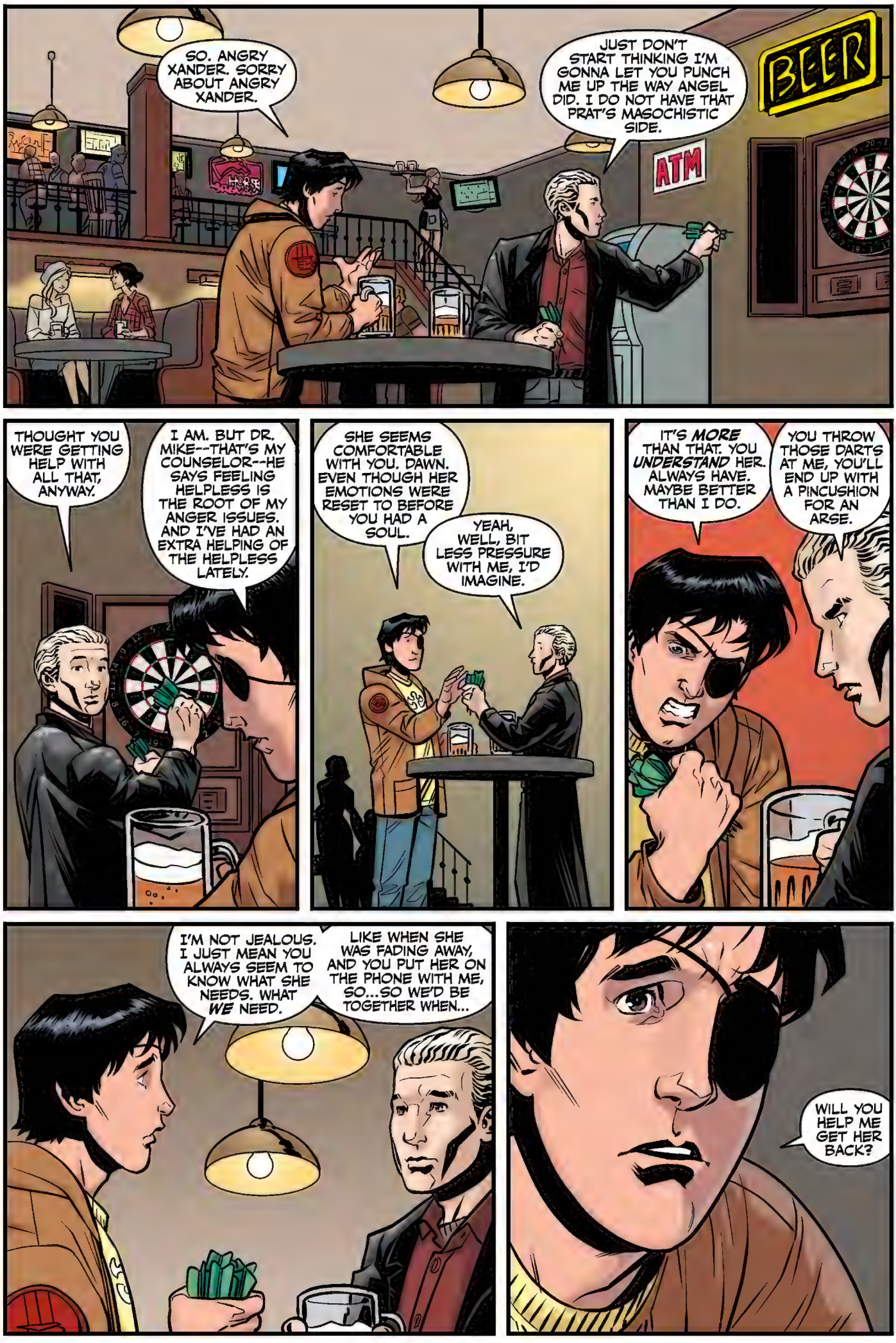

TOO RIGHT. I WAS WATCHIN' A *DR. PHIL*-- NOT THAT I MAKE A HABIT OF IT, MIND--ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-LOVE.
AND NOT THE WANKER VARIETY. I'M TALKIN' ABOUT THE UNIVERSAL TRUTH THAT YOU GOT TO LOVE YOURSELF BEFORE YOU CAN TRULY LOVE SOMEONE ELSE, OR THEM YOU.

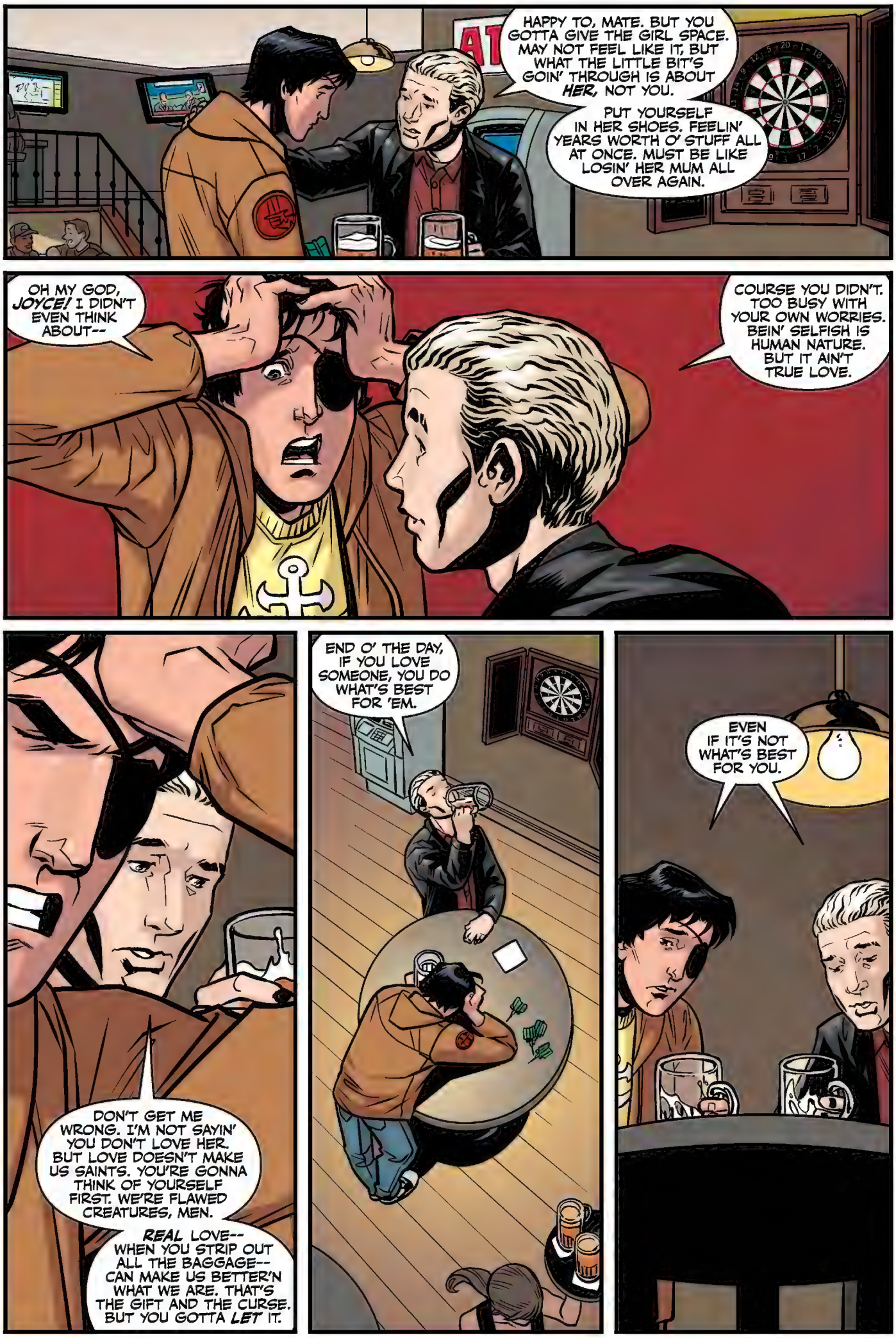

YOU EVER HEAR OF *THE SECRET?* SAW THAT ON ANOTHER SHOW. PREMISE BEING, THE SAME TYPE O' ENERGY THAT YOU PUT OUT INTO THE UNIVERSE COMES BACK TO YOU.
IF YOU'RE MOPIN' ABOUT, SEE, YOU ATTRACT MOPEY STUFF. BUT IF YOU'RE POSITIVE, LIKE ME, LOOKIN' AT THE BRIGHT SIDE, IT ALL WORKS ITSELF OUT--


WILL YOU *SHUT YOUR MOUTH?*
KRASH

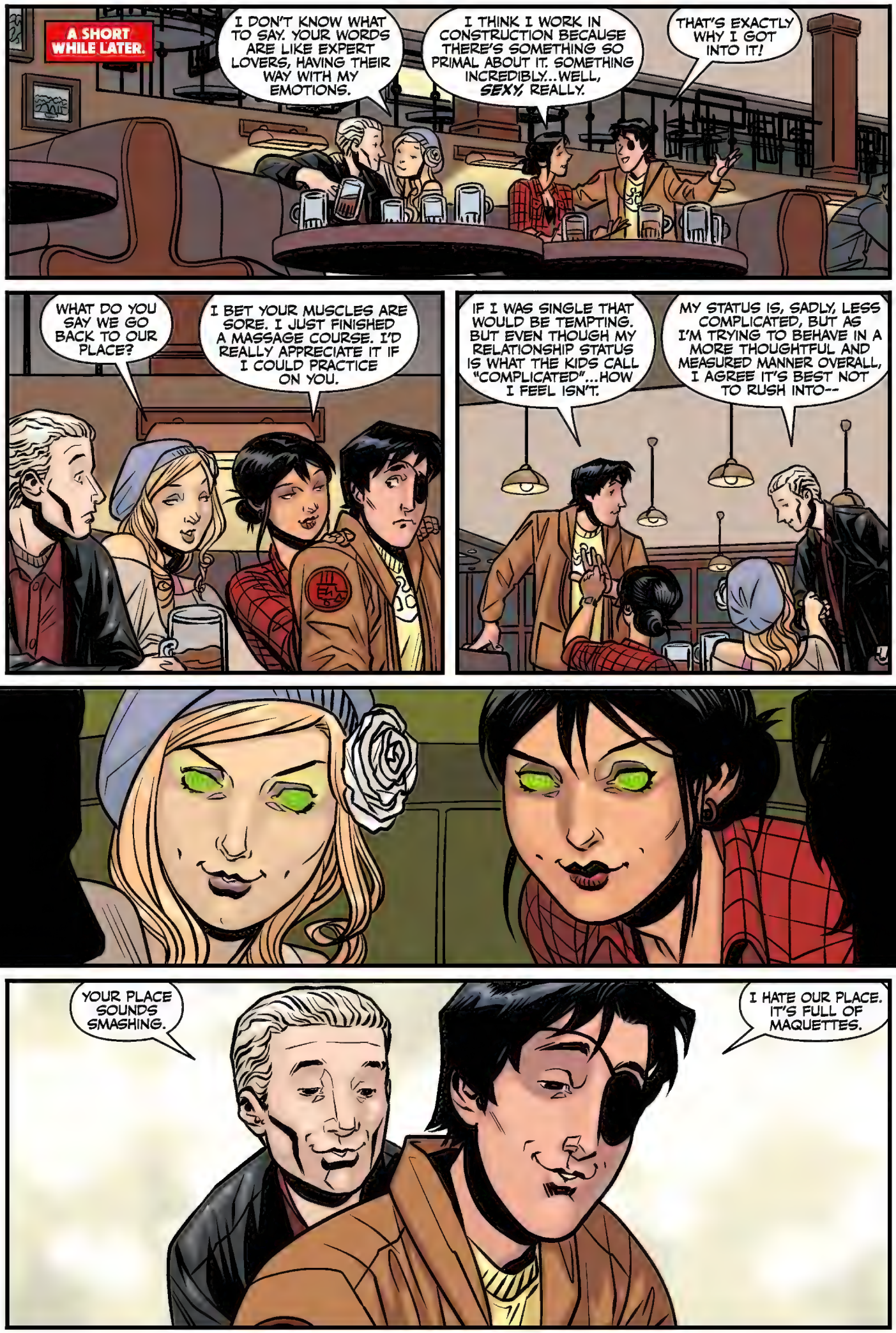
YOU ARE *SO FULL OF CRAP!* A *BLIND* MAN COULD SEE YOU'RE NOT EVEN *CLOSE* TO BEING OVER BUFFY!
THE ONLY ONE YOU'RE FOOLING IS YOURSELF! *AND YOU EVEN SUCK AT THAT!*


WHAT SAY WE POP 'ROUND THE PUB FOR A PINT IN LIEU OF ME TEARING OUT YOUR JUGULAR?
SOLD.


SO. ANGRY XANDER. SORRY ABOUT ANGRY XANDER.
JUST DON'T START THINKING I'M GONNA LET YOU PUNCH ME UP THE WAY ANGEL DID. I DO NOT HAVE THAT PRAT'S MASOCHISTIC SIDE.
BEER
ATM
THOUGHT YOU WERE GETTING HELP WITH ALL THAT, ANYWAY.
I AM. BUT DR. MIKE--THAT'S MY COUNSELOR--HE SAYS FEELING HELPLESS IS THE ROOT OF MY ANGER ISSUES. AND I'VE HAD AN EXTRA HELPING OF THE HELPLESS LATELY.
SHE SEEMS COMFORTABLE WITH YOU. DAWN. EVEN THOUGH HER EMOTIONS WERE RESET TO BEFORE YOU HAD A SOUL.
YEAH, WELL, BIT LESS PRESSURE WITH ME, I'D IMAGINE.
IT'S *MORE* THAN THAT. YOU *UNDERSTAND* HER. ALWAYS HAVE. MAYBE BETTER THAN I DO.
YOU THROW THOSE DARTS AT ME, YOU'LL END UP WITH A PINCUSHION FOR AN ARSE.
I'M NOT JEALOUS. I JUST MEAN YOU ALWAYS SEEM TO KNOW WHAT SHE NEEDS. WHAT *WE* NEED.
LIKE WHEN SHE WAS FADING AWAY, AND YOU PUT HER ON THE PHONE WITH ME, SO...SO WE'D BE TOGETHER WHEN...
WILL YOU HELP ME GET HER BACK?

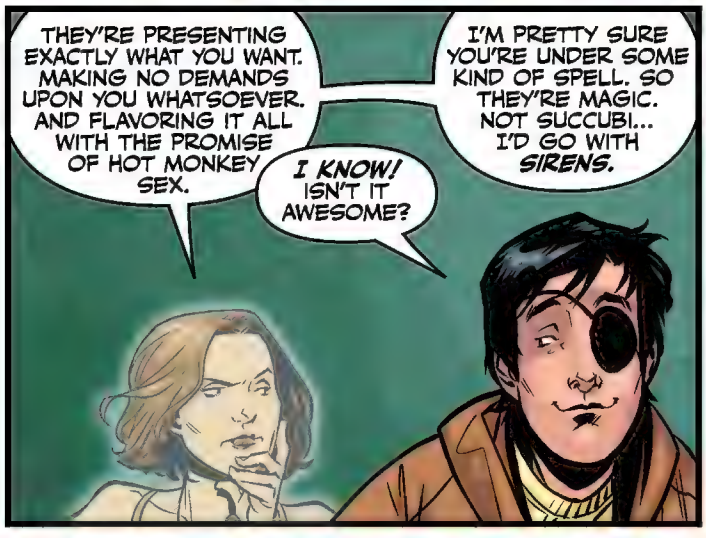

HAPPY TO, MATE. BUT YOU GOTTA GIVE THE GIRL SPACE. MAY NOT FEEL LIKE IT, BUT WHAT THE LITTLE BIT'S GOIN' THROUGH IS ABOUT *HER,* NOT YOU.
PUT YOURSELF IN HER SHOES. FEELIN' YEARS WORTH O' STUFF ALL AT ONCE. MUST BE LIKE LOSIN' HER MUM ALL OVER AGAIN.
OH MY GOD, *JOYCE!* I DIDN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT--
COURSE YOU DIDN'T. TOO BUSY WITH YOUR OWN WORRIES. BEIN' SELFISH IS HUMAN NATURE. BUT IT AIN'T TRUE LOVE.
DON'T GET ME WRONG. I'M NOT SAYIN' YOU DON'T LOVE HER. BUT LOVE DOESN'T MAKE US SAINTS. YOU'RE GONNA THINK OF YOURSELF FIRST. WE'RE FLAWED CREATURES, MEN.
REAL LOVE-- WHEN YOU STRIP OUT ALL THE BAGGAGE-- CAN MAKE US BETTER'N WHAT WE ARE. THAT'S THE GIFT AND THE CURSE. BUT YOU GOTTA *LET* IT.
END O' THE DAY, IF YOU LOVE SOMEONE, YOU DO WHAT'S BEST FOR 'EM.
EVEN IF IT'S NOT WHAT'S BEST FOR YOU.

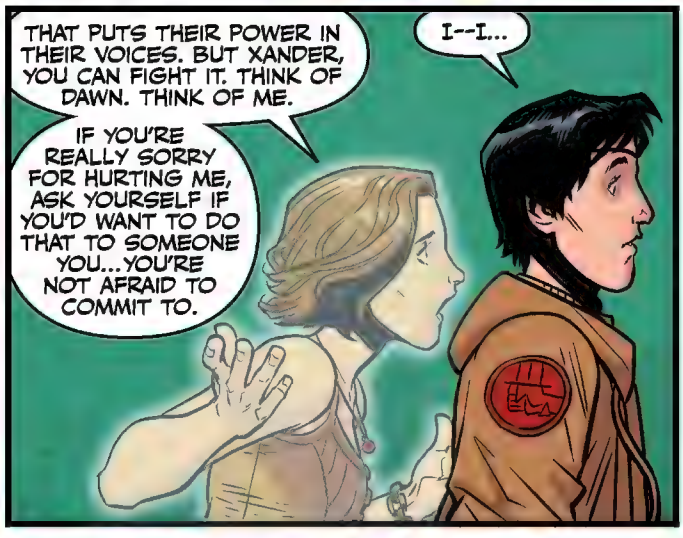
I'M SORRY...I DIDN'T MEAN TO EAVESDROP, BUT I COULDN'T HELP HEARING WHAT YOU JUST SAID.
GOT A BIT LOQUACIOUS, DID I? SORRY.
NO, IT WAS *BEAUTIFUL.* LIKE POETRY.
ITM
YOU THINK SO?
WELL, I'M NO EXPERT, JUST A FAN. BUT IT REMINDED ME OF THE ROMANTICISM OF SHELLEY OR KEATS, FILTERED THROUGH THE MODERN AESTHETIC OF A RAEGAN BUTCHER.
I MUST KNOW YOUR NAME, FOR YOU ARE MY NEW FAVORITE PERSON IN THE WORLD.
THELMA. DON'T MAKE FUN.
OF A LADY ENDOWED WITH SUCH RARE BEAUTY AND TASTE? I'D SOONER REND MY OWN HEART FROM MY BREAST. UH, WITH A PRISON SHIV.
YEAH, COOL STORY, BUT WE WERE KINDA IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING.
EXCUSE ME...
OY. NO OFFENSE, BUT I'M NOT LOOKING FOR--
IS THAT A DIAMOND BACK ARCTIC FOX TOOL BELT?
IS THAT A HELLBOY B.P.R.D. PATCH?


A SHORT WHILE LATER.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. YOUR WORDS ARE LIKE EXPERT LOVERS, HAVING THEIR WAY WITH MY EMOTIONS.
I THINK I WORK IN CONSTRUCTION BECAUSE THERE'S SOMETHING SO PRIMAL ABOUT IT. SOMETHING INCREDIBLY...WELL, SEXY, REALLY.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHY I GOT INTO IT!
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GO BACK TO OUR PLACE?
I BET YOUR MUSCLES ARE SORE. I JUST FINISHED A MASSAGE COURSE. I'D REALLY APPRECIATE IT IF I COULD PRACTICE ON YOU.
IF I WAS SINGLE THAT WOULD BE TEMPTING. BUT EVEN THOUGH MY RELATIONSHIP STATUS IS WHAT THE KIDS CALL "COMPLICATED"...HOW I FEEL ISN'T.
MY STATUS IS, SADLY, LESS COMPLICATED, BUT AS I'M TRYING TO BEHAVE IN A MORE THOUGHTFUL AND MEASURED MANNER OVERALL, I AGREE IT'S BEST NOT TO RUSH INTO--
YOUR PLACE SOUNDS SMASHING.
I HATE OUR PLACE. IT'S FULL OF MAQUETTES.

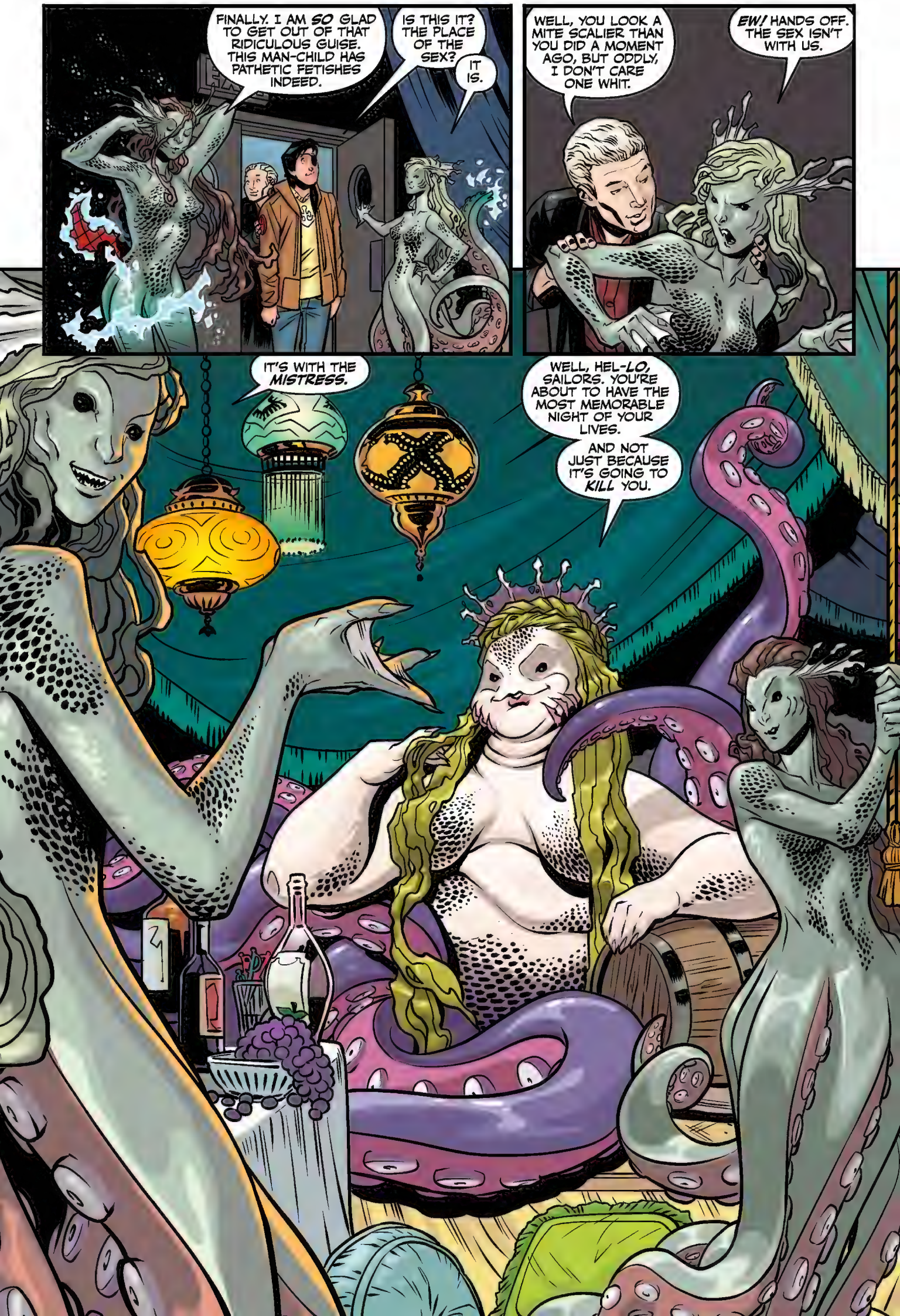
I THINK WE'LL BE HAVING THE SEX. DO YOU THINK WE'LL BE HAVING THE SEX?
IF THAT'S WHAT THE LADIES WANT, IT'S ONLY GENTLEMANLY TO PROVIDE IT. IF THEY WANT ME TO DISEMBOWEL YOU, I'LL DO THAT TOO.
YEAH, THAT'S THE POLITE THING.
RIZE OR DIE

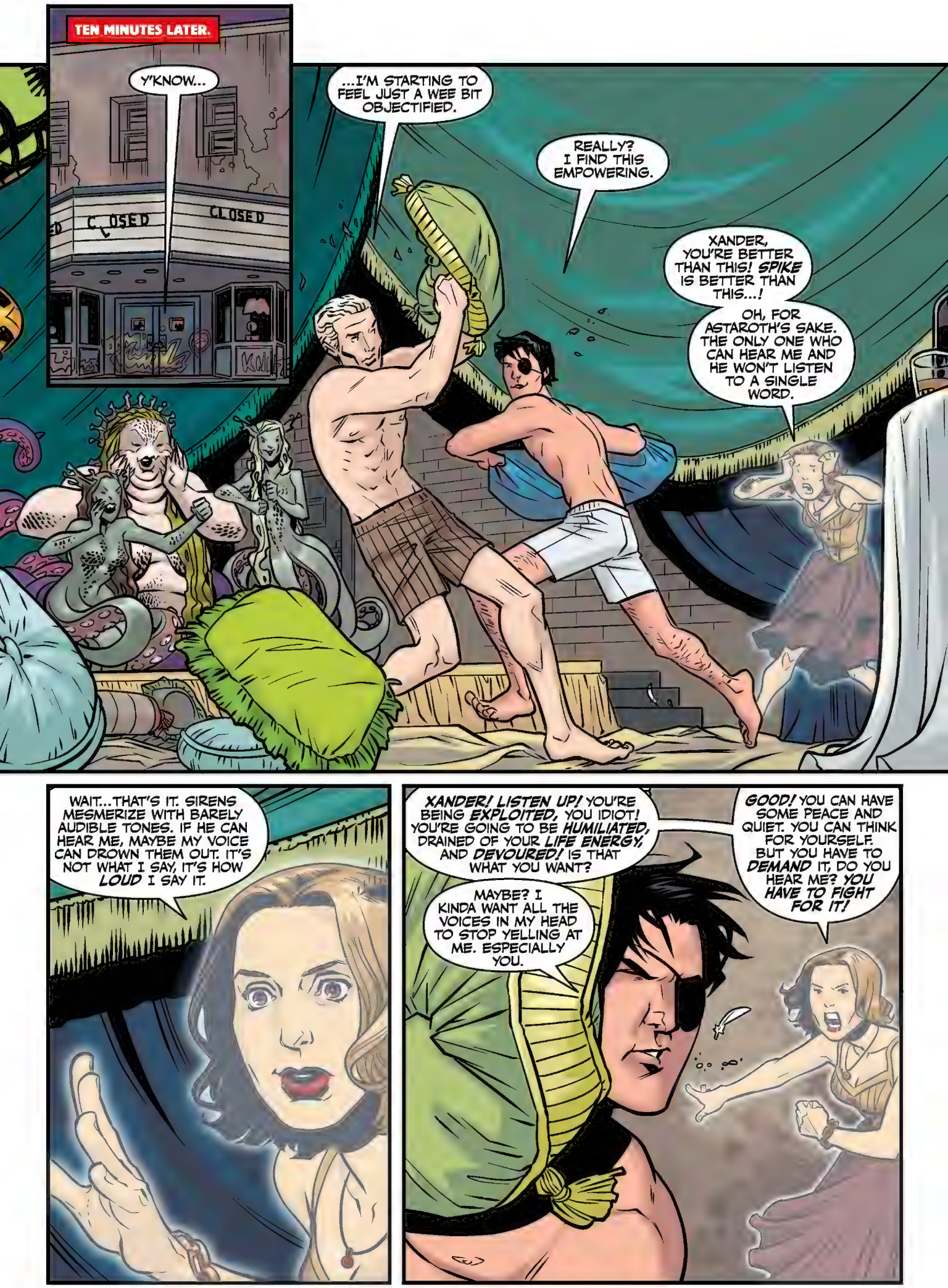
OKAY. I TRY TO GIVE YOU SOME PRIVACY, BUT THIS HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH.
OH, HEY, GHOST ANYA. I CAN'T TALK RIGHT NOW, I HAVE TO GO TO HER PLACE.
YOU REALIZE THIS IS A TRAP, RIGHT? THESE AREN'T REAL WOMEN. THEY'RE RIDICULOUS CARICATURES.
THAT'S WHAT WE LIKE ABOUT THEM.


THEY'RE PRESENTING EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT. MAKING NO DEMANDS UPON YOU WHATSOEVER. AND FLAVORING IT ALL WITH THE PROMISE OF HOT MONKEY SEX.
I'M PRETTY SURE YOU'RE UNDER SOME KIND OF SPELL. SO THEY'RE MAGIC. NOT SUCCUBI... I'D GO WITH SIRENS.
I KNOW! ISN'T IT AWESOME?

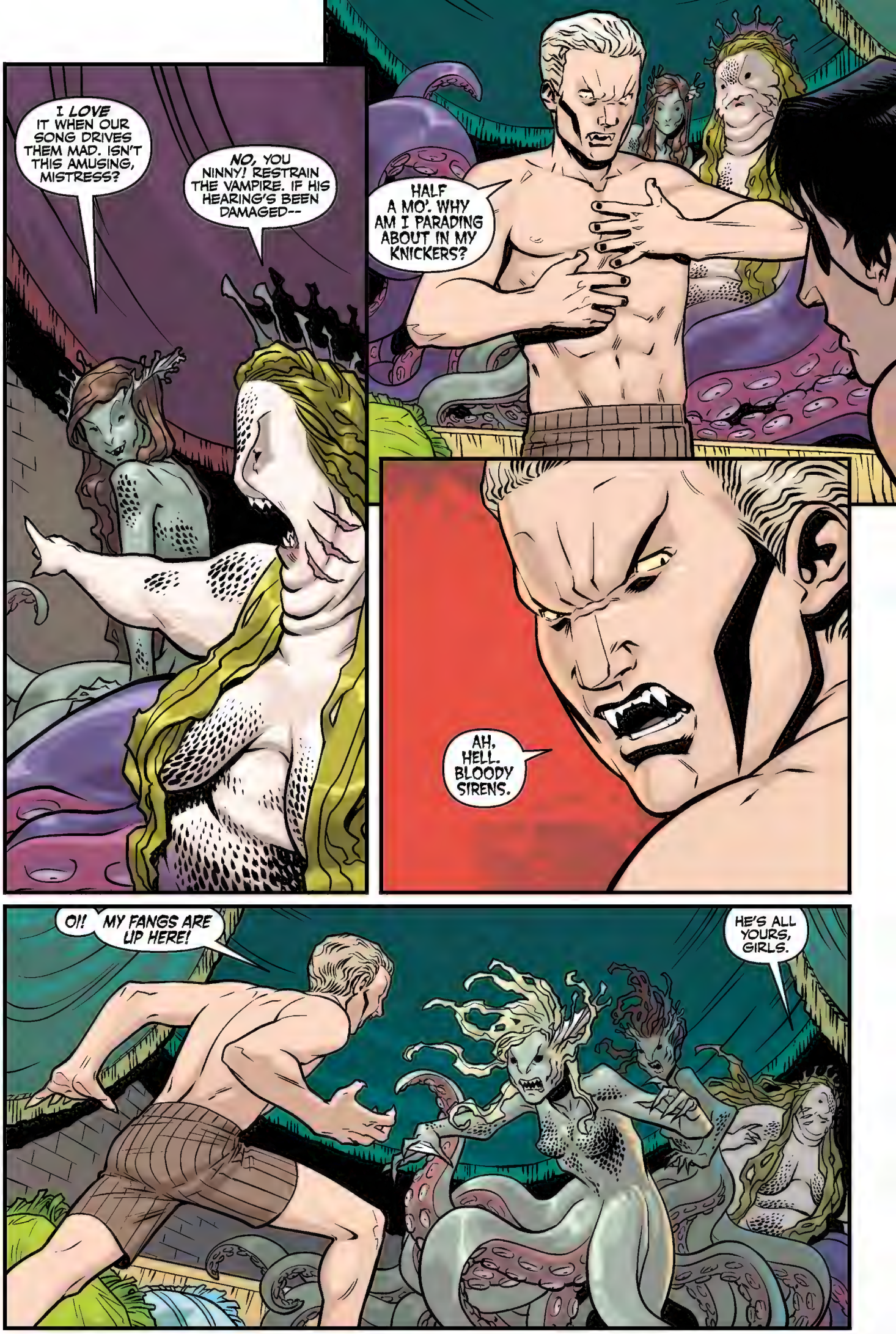

THAT PUTS THEIR POWER IN THEIR VOICES. BUT XANDER, YOU CAN FIGHT IT. THINK OF DAWN. THINK OF ME.
I--I...
IF YOU'RE REALLY SORRY FOR HURTING ME, ASK YOURSELF IF YOU'D WANT TO DO THAT TO SOMEONE YOU...YOU'RE NOT AFRAID TO COMMIT TO.

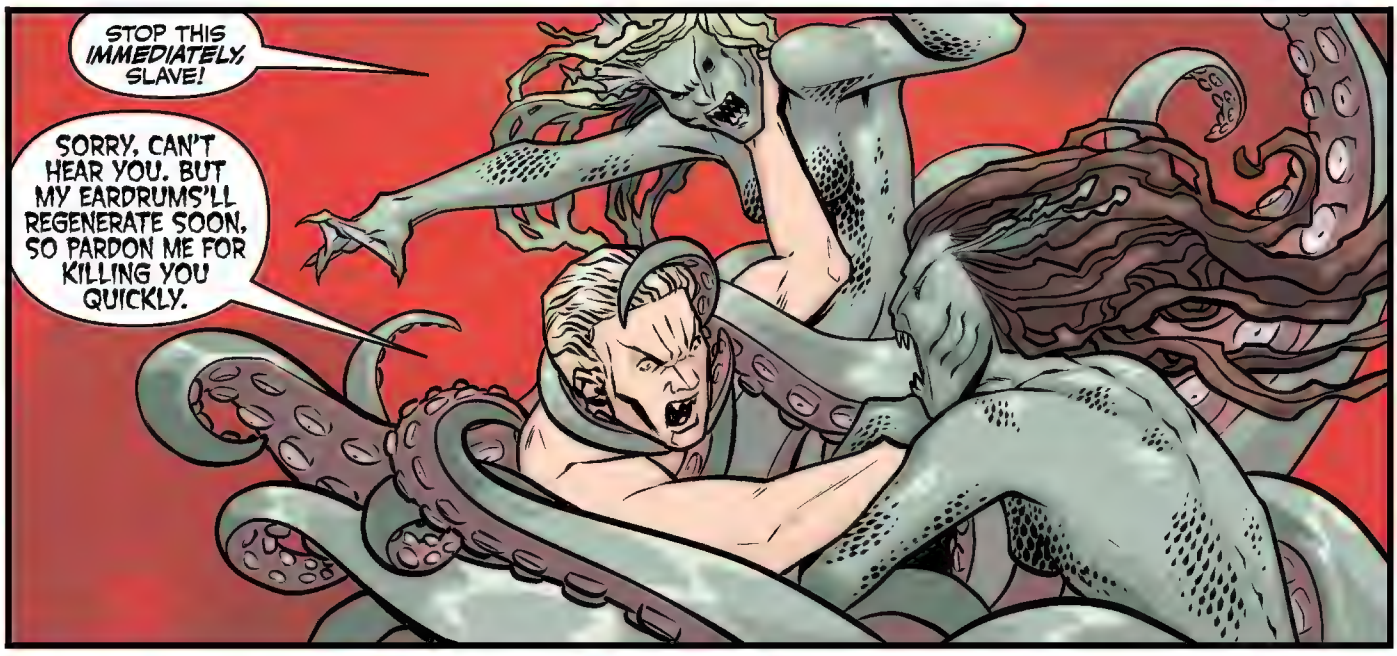
ASKED AND ANSWERED! GOTTA GO.
YUP. DEFINITELY SIRENS.

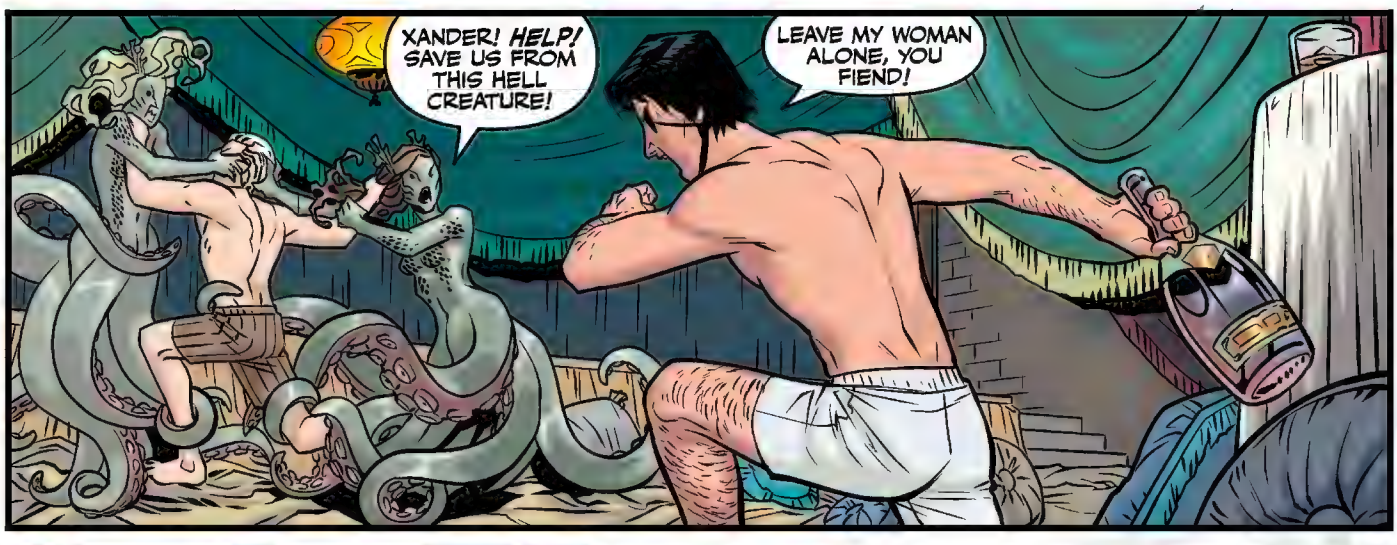

FINALLY. I AM SO GLAD TO GET OUT OF THAT RIDICULOUS GUISE. THIS MAN-CHILD HAS PATHETIC FETISHES INDEED.
IS THIS IT? THE PLACE OF THE SEX?
IT IS.
WELL, YOU LOOK A MITE SCALIER THAN YOU DID A MOMENT AGO, BUT ODDLY, I DON'T CARE ONE WHIT.
EW! HANDS OFF. THE SEX ISN'T WITH US.
IT'S WITH THE MISTRESS.
WELL, HEL-LO, SAILORS. YOU'RE ABOUT TO HAVE THE MOST MEMORABLE NIGHT OF YOUR LIVES.
AND NOT JUST BECAUSE IT'S GOING TO KILL YOU.

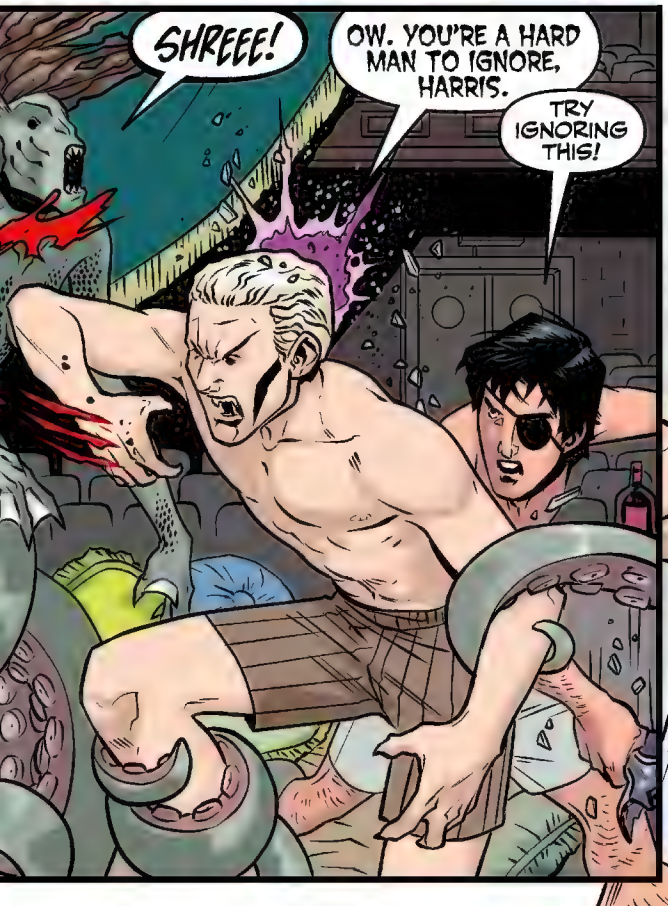

TEN MINUTES LATER.
Y'KNOW...
CLOSED
CLOSED
...I'M STARTING TO FEEL JUST A WEE BIT OBJECTIFIED.
REALLY? I FIND THIS EMPOWERING.
XANDER, YOU'RE BETTER THAN THIS! SPIKE IS BETTER THAN THIS...!
OH, FOR ASTAROTH'S SAKE. THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN HEAR ME AND HE WON'T LISTEN TO A SINGLE WORD.
WAIT...THAT'S IT. SIRENS MESMERIZE WITH BARELY AUDIBLE TONES. IF HE CAN HEAR ME, MAYBE MY VOICE CAN DROWN THEM OUT. IT'S NOT WHAT I SAY, IT'S HOW LOUD I SAY IT.
XANDER! LISTEN UP! YOU'RE BEING EXPLOITED, YOU IDIOT! YOU'RE GOING TO BE HUMILIATED, DRAINED OF YOUR LIFE ENERGY, AND DEVOURED! IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
MAYBE? I KINDA WANT ALL THE VOICES IN MY HEAD TO STOP YELLING AT ME. ESPECIALLY YOU.
GOOD! YOU CAN HAVE SOME PEACE AND QUIET. YOU CAN THINK FOR YOURSELF. BUT YOU HAVE TO DEMAND IT, DO YOU HEAR ME? YOU HAVE TO FIGHT FOR IT!

I...HEAR YOU. JUST FOR SECONDS AT A TIME. BUT I CAN'T FIGHT THE OTHER VOICES...NOT LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. WHAT DO I--
HOLD ON. I GOT IT.
HA! GRAVE MISCALCULATION, THROWING AWAY YOUR WEAPON. NOW YOU'RE IN FOR THE PILLOWING OF YOUR LIFE, MY FINE FEATHERED--
WHAT THE HELL...?
OW!!
SHHLKK
YOU LITTLE PONCE! YOU POKED OUT MY BLOODY EARDRUMS! I'LL KILL YOU!
SUDDENLY WHAT I JUST DID SEEMS ILL ADVISED.

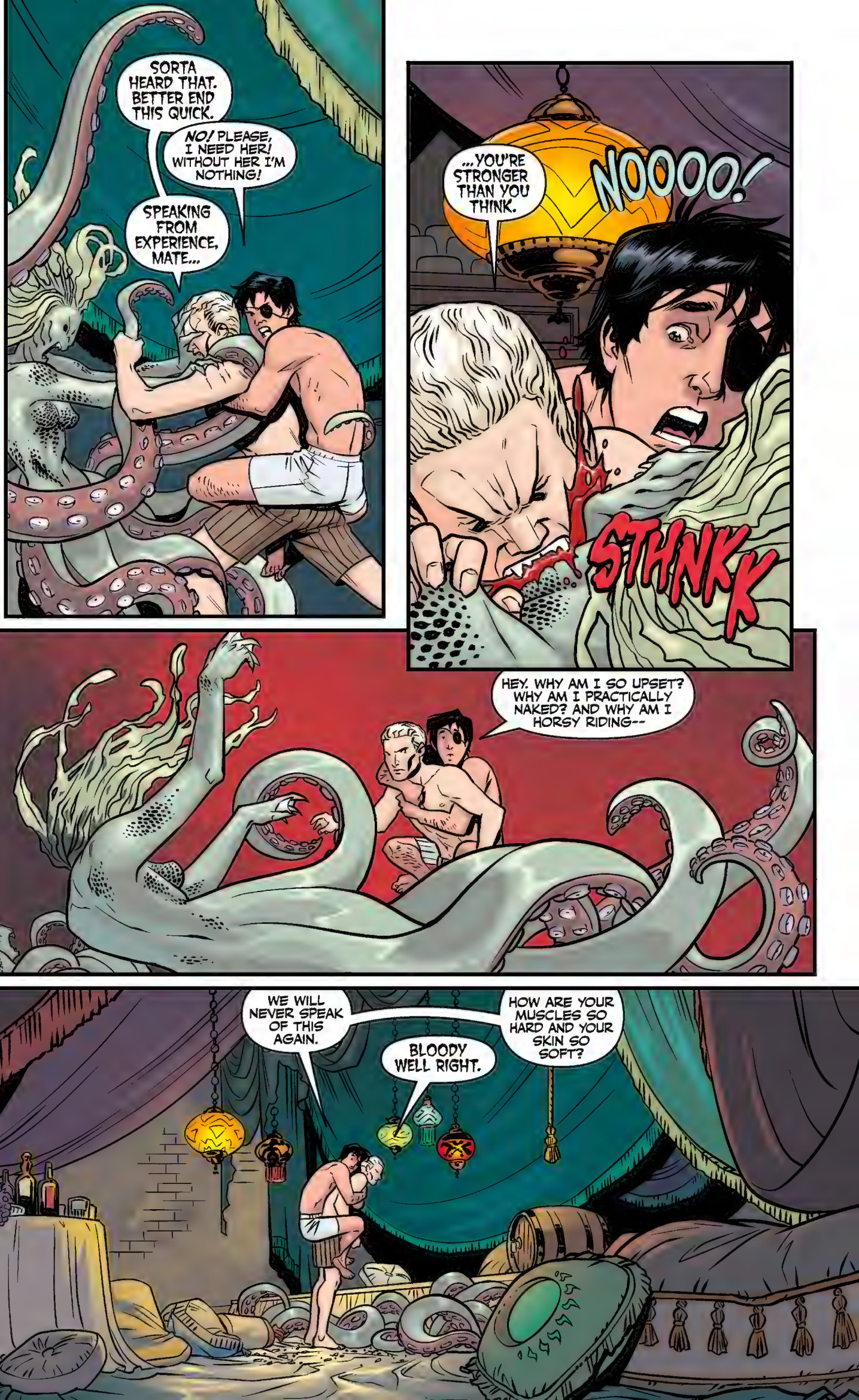

I LOVE IT WHEN OUR SONG DRIVES THEM MAD. ISN'T THIS AMUSING, MISTRESS?
NO, YOU NINNY! RESTRAIN THE VAMPIRE. IF HIS HEARING'S BEEN DAMAGED--
HALF A MO'. WHY AM I PARADING ABOUT IN MY KNICKERS?
AH, HELL. BLOODY SIRENS.
OI! MY FANGS ARE UP HERE!
HE'S ALL YOURS, GIRLS.

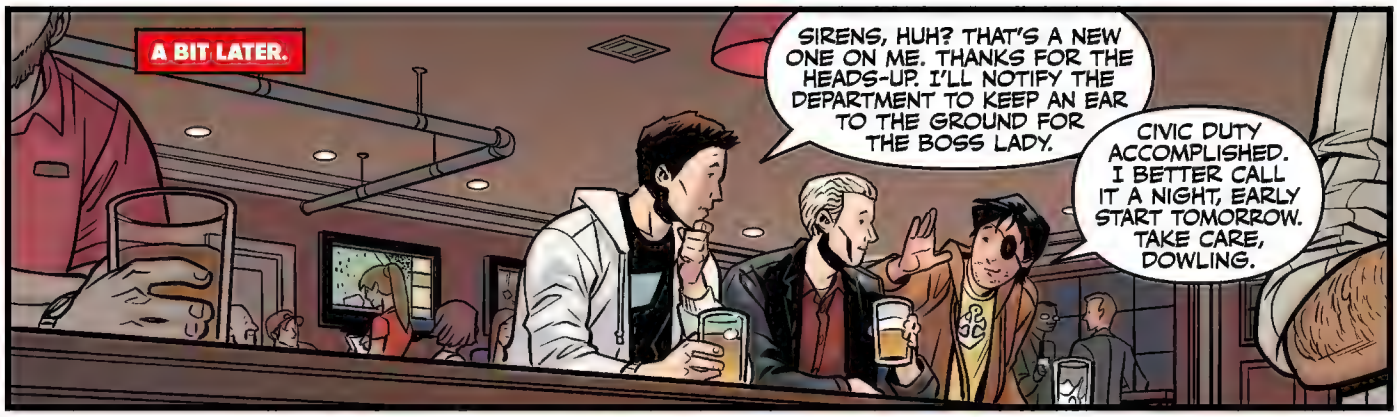

STOP THIS IMMEDIATELY, SLAVE!
SORRY, CAN'T HEAR YOU. BUT MY EARDRUMS'LL REGENERATE SOON, SO PARDON ME FOR KILLING YOU QUICKLY.


XANDER! HELP! SAVE US FROM THIS HELL CREATURE!
LEAVE MY WOMAN ALONE, YOU FIEND!

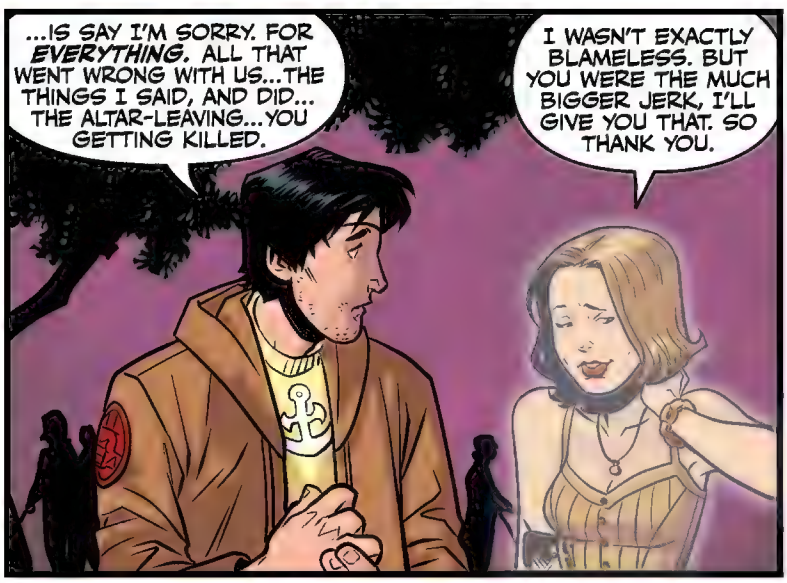

SHREEE!
OW. YOU'RE A HARD MAN TO IGNORE, HARRIS.
TRY IGNORING THIS!

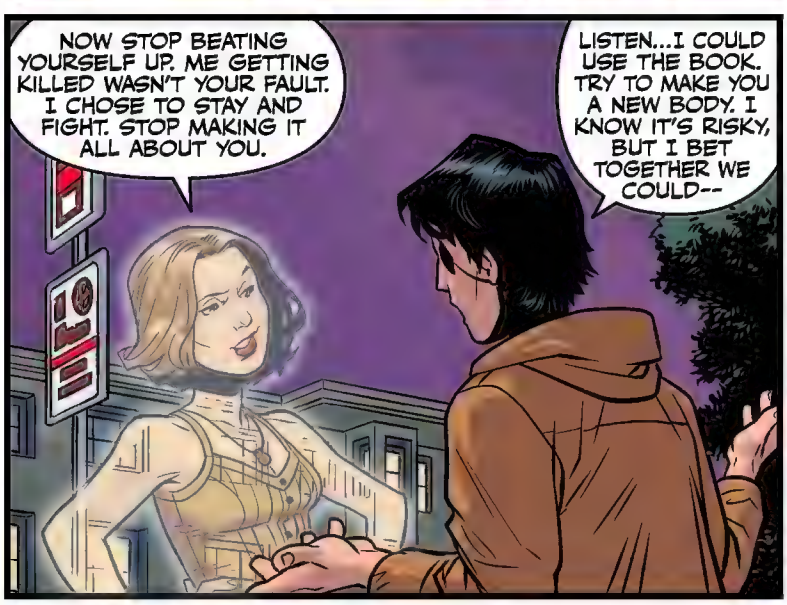
OH, THAT IS JUST NOT NECESSARY! YOU'RE ALL SWEATY!
AND YOU'RE GONNA BE ALL DEAD!
OOH, I LIKE THAT. TOTAL CATCH PHRASE POTENTIAL.

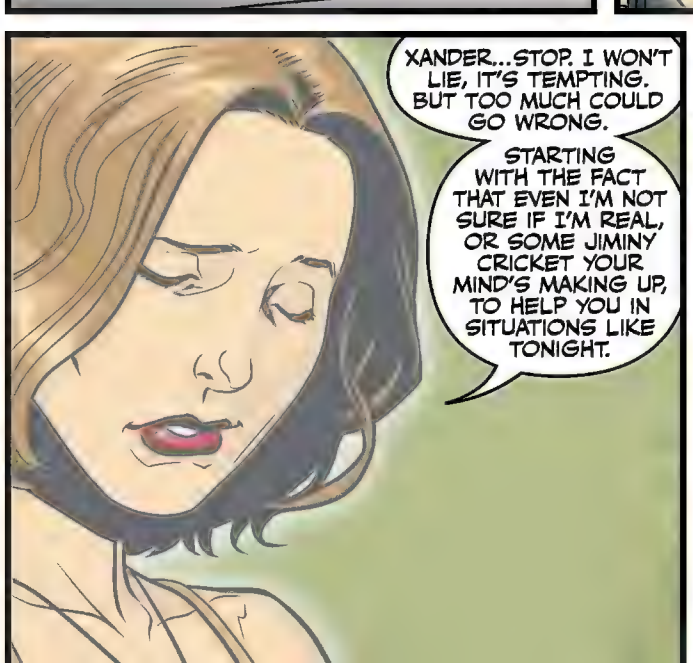

SORTA HEARD THAT. BETTER END THIS QUICK.
NO! PLEASE, I NEED HER! WITHOUT HER I'M NOTHING!
SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE, MATE...
...YOU'RE STRONGER THAN YOU THINK.
NOOOO!
STHNKK
HEY. WHY AM I SO UPSET? WHY AM I PRACTICALLY NAKED? AND WHY AM I HORSY RIDING--
WE WILL NEVER SPEAK OF THIS AGAIN.
BLOODY WELL RIGHT.
HOW ARE YOUR MUSCLES SO HARD AND YOUR SKIN SO SOFT?

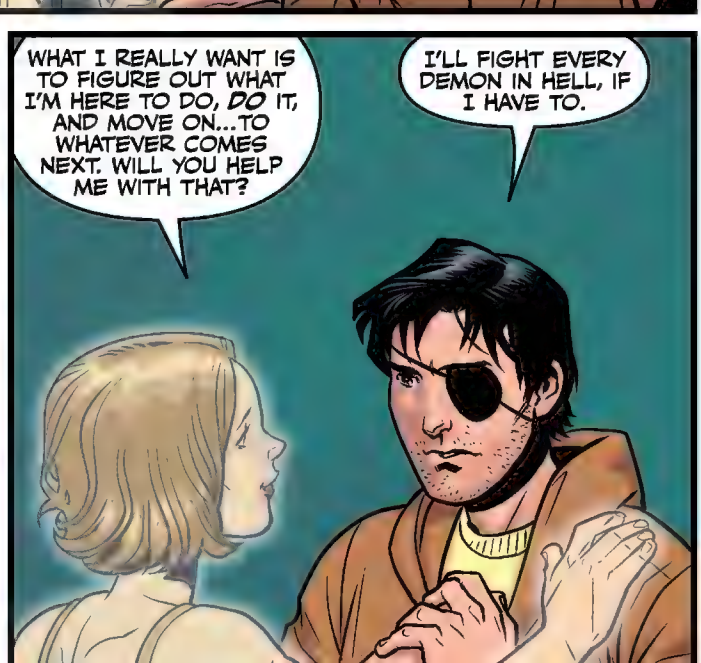

A BIT LATER.
SIRENS, HUH? THAT'S A NEW ONE ON ME. THANKS FOR THE HEADS-UP. I'LL NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT TO KEEP AN EAR TO THE GROUND FOR THE BOSS LADY.
CIVIC DUTY ACCOMPLISHED. I BETTER CALL IT A NIGHT, EARLY START TOMORROW. TAKE CARE, DOWLING.

THANKS AGAIN, ANYA. DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD'VE DONE WITHOUT YOU.
PROBABLY BEEN EATEN. SIRENS HAVE THIS THING THEY DO. THINK *HUMAN SUSHI*--
YEAH, I'D RATHER NOT. WHAT I DID WANT TO DO...


...IS SAY I'M SORRY. FOR *EVERYTHING*. ALL THAT WENT WRONG WITH US...THE THINGS I SAID, AND DID... THE ALTAR-LEAVING...YOU GETTING KILLED.
I WASN'T EXACTLY BLAMELESS. BUT YOU WERE THE MUCH BIGGER JERK, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT. SO THANK YOU.


NOW STOP BEATING YOURSELF UP. ME GETTING KILLED WASN'T YOUR FAULT. I CHOSE TO STAY AND FIGHT. STOP MAKING IT ALL ABOUT YOU.
LISTEN...I COULD USE THE BOOK. TRY TO MAKE YOU A NEW BODY. I KNOW IT'S RISKY, BUT I BET TOGETHER WE COULD--

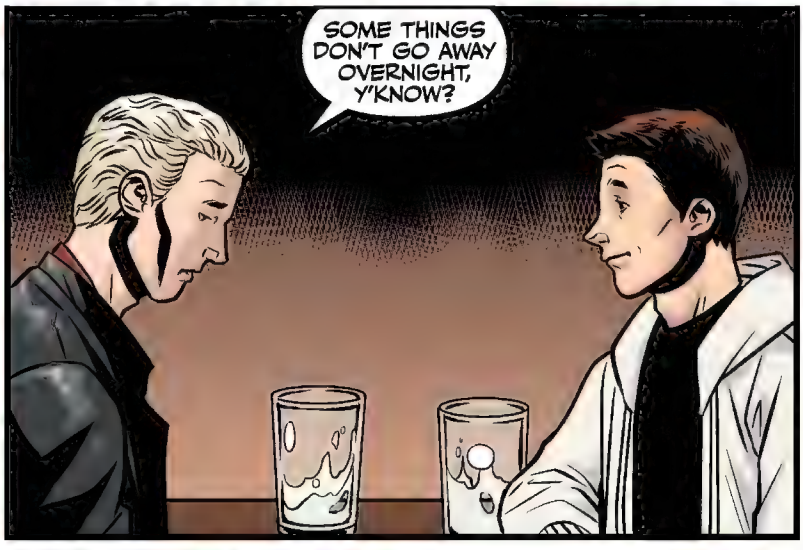

XANDER...STOP. I WON'T LIE, IT'S TEMPTING. BUT TOO MUCH COULD GO WRONG.
STARTING WITH THE FACT THAT EVEN I'M NOT SURE IF I'M REAL, OR SOME JIMINY CRICKET YOUR MIND'S MAKING UP, TO HELP YOU IN SITUATIONS LIKE TONIGHT.

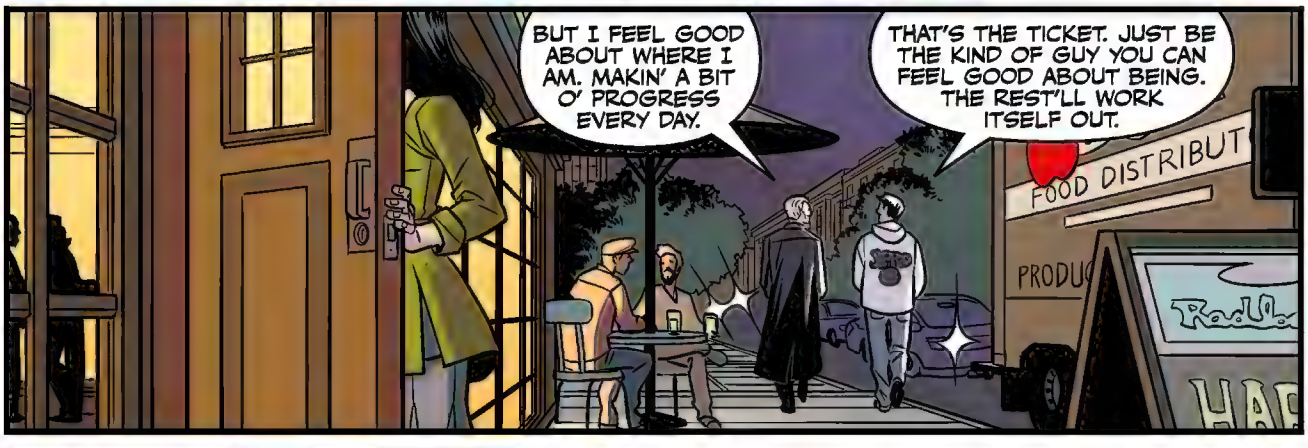

WHAT I REALLY WANT IS TO FIGURE OUT WHAT I'M HERE TO DO, *DO* IT, AND MOVE ON...TO WHATEVER COMES NEXT. WILL YOU HELP ME WITH THAT?
I'LL FIGHT EVERY DEMON IN HELL, IF I HAVE TO.

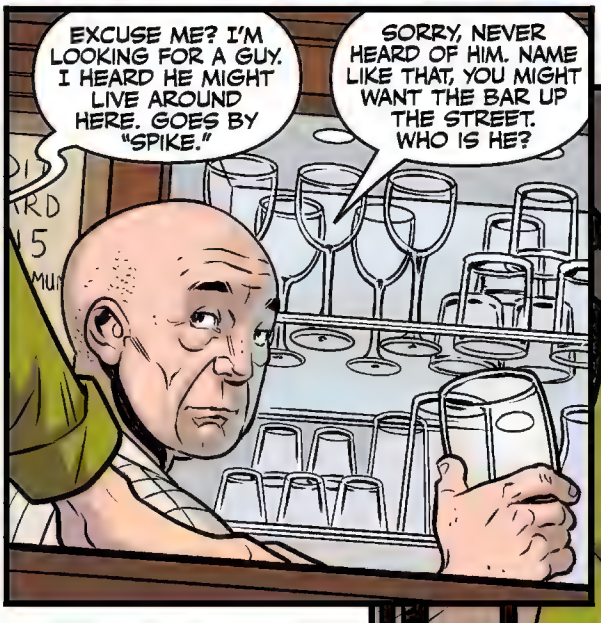
SEE? YOU CAN HAVE A MATURE RELATIONSHIP WITH A WOMAN. A GHOST WOMAN. NEXT STEP, A REAL ONE.
DON'T RUSH ME. IT'LL TAKE TIME. BUT I'M NOT GIVING UP.
THERE'S MY BOY. MAYBE TOMORROW WE CAN TALK ABOUT MORE *RESPONSIBLE* WAYS TO USE THE BOOK. BUT FOR NOW, GO GET SOME SLEEP.
SLAM

THANKS FOR THE BEER, MATE. THAT APP OF YOURS MAKES SOME ACE SUGGESTIONS.
TELL ME ONE THING. DO YOU STILL LOVE HER?
SFPD

HELLFIRE AND DAMNATION, WHY DOES *EVERYONE* THINK I'M SOME SORT OF MOONY-EYED KID--

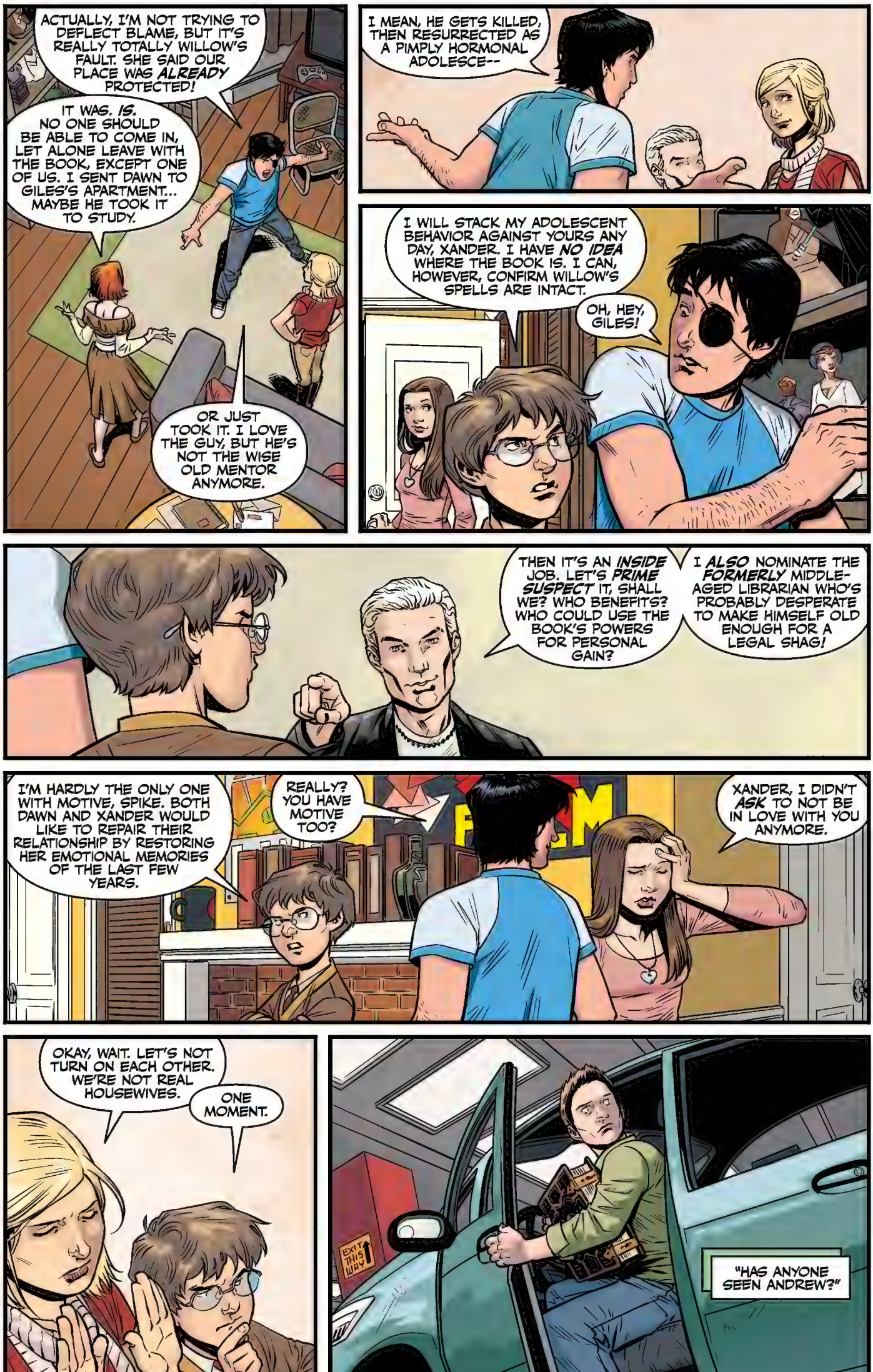

SOME THINGS DON'T GO AWAY OVERNIGHT, Y'KNOW?

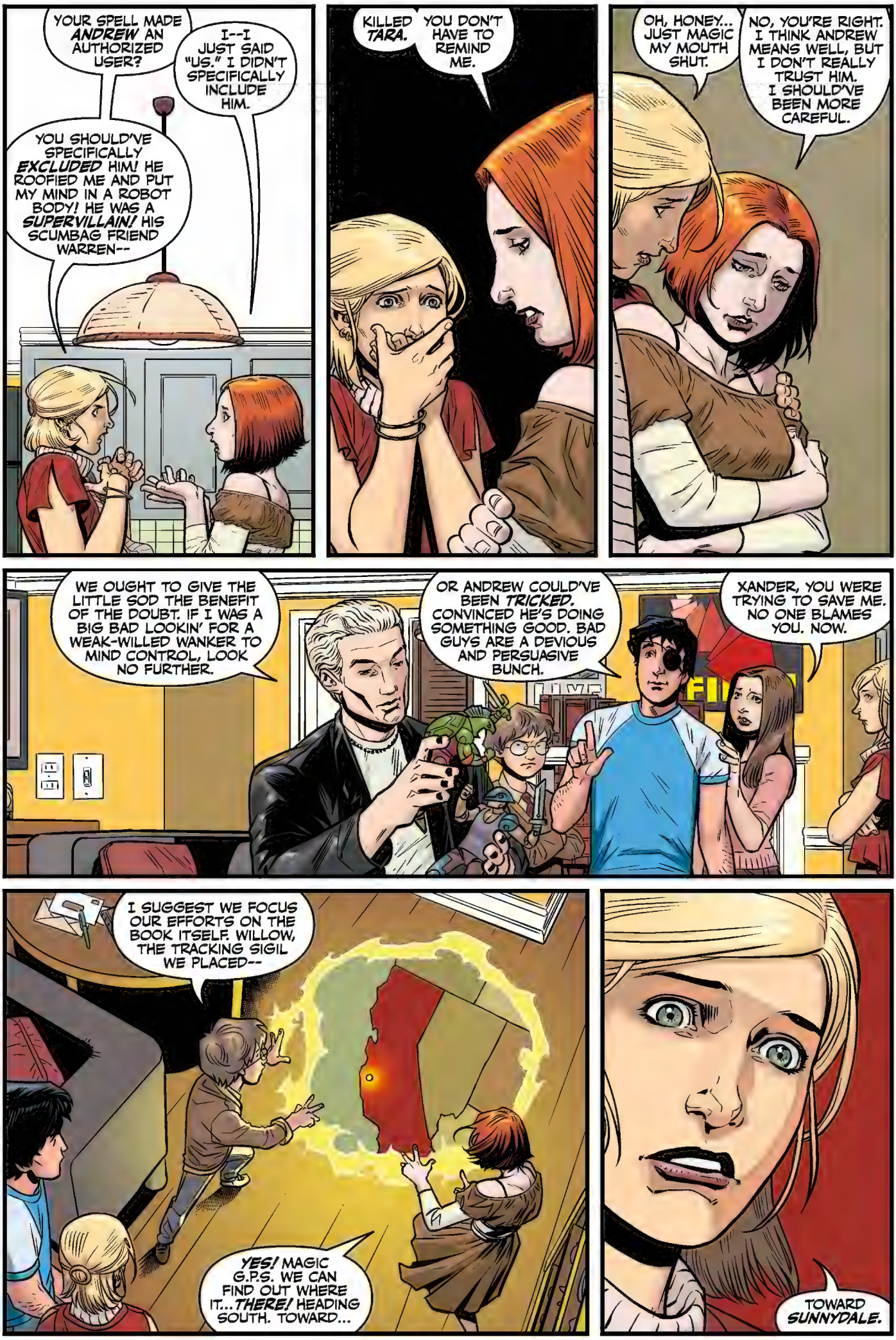

BUT I FEEL GOOD ABOUT WHERE I AM. MAKIN' A BIT O' PROGRESS EVERY DAY.
THAT'S THE TICKET. JUST BE THE KIND OF GUY YOU CAN FEEL GOOD ABOUT BEING. THE REST'LL WORK ITSELF OUT.
FOOD DISTRIBUT


EXCUSE ME? I'M LOOKING FOR A GUY. I HEARD HE MIGHT LIVE AROUND HERE. GOES BY "SPIKE."
SORRY, NEVER HEARD OF HIM. NAME LIKE THAT, YOU MIGHT WANT THE BAR UP THE STREET. WHO IS HE?

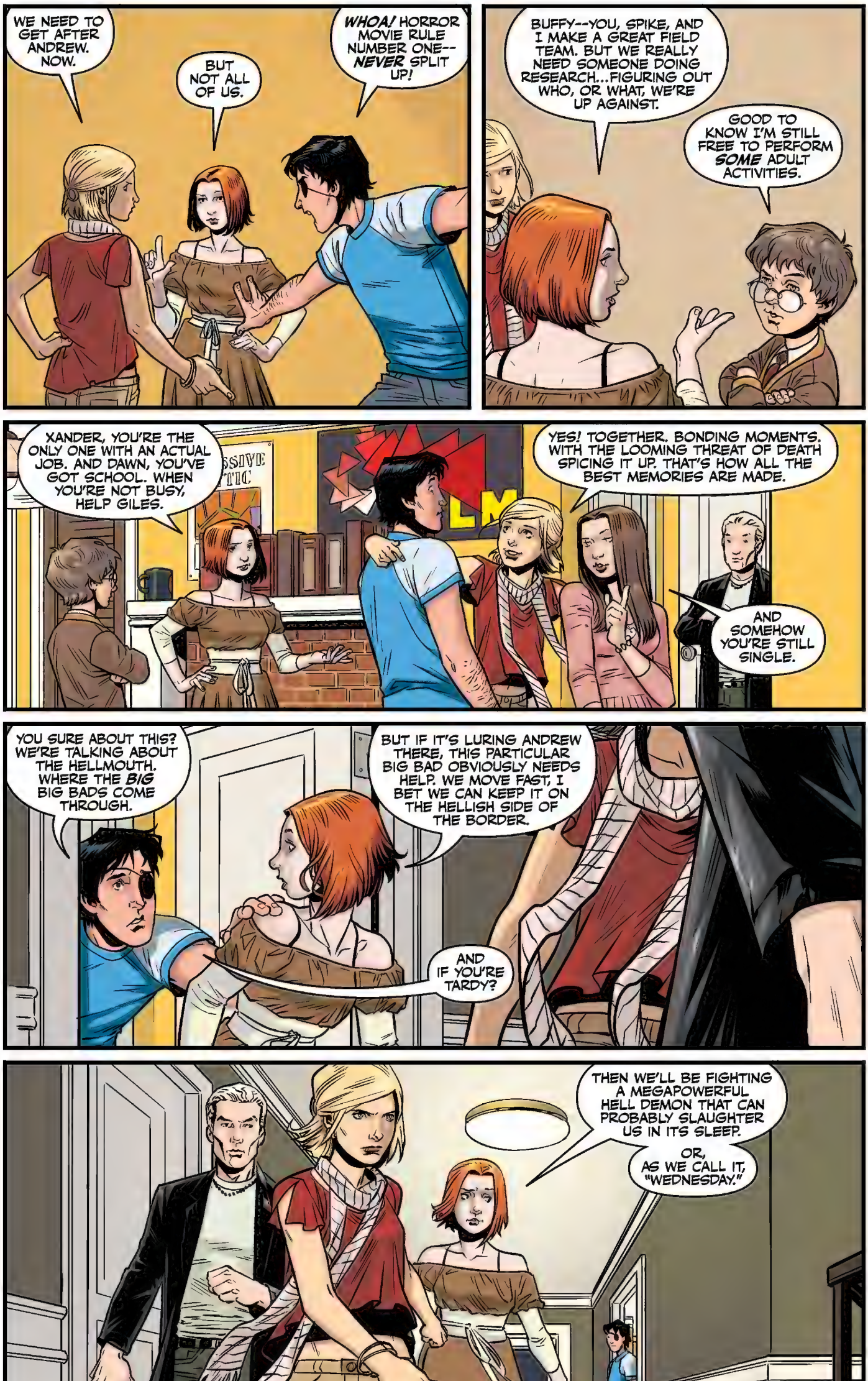
THE ONE WHO GOT AWAY.
IF HE COMES IN... TELL HIM *DYLAN'S* LOOKING FOR HIM.

XANDER AND SPIKE'S APARTMENT.
YOU DID NOT JUST TELL ME "THE BOOK'S GONE."
THE BOOK? THE VAMPYR BOOK GILES GAVE ME WHEN I WAS A ROOKIE SLAYER, WITH ALL THE RULES OF MAGIC IN IT?
THE BOOK THAT, NOW THAT MAGIC'S BEEN REBOOTED, ANYONE COULD USE TO SET NEW RULES?
THAT EVIL CREATURES COULD USE TO MAKE EVIL THINGS HAPPEN JUST BY WRITING EVIL WORDS IN IT? THAT BOOK?
OKAY, YOU'RE USING A LOT OF WORDS TO OVERSIMPLIFY A VERY COMPLEX--
DON'T EVEN, XANDER. I ASKED YOU GUYS TO GUARD IT WHILE WILLOW CASTS PROTECTION SPELLS ON OUR NEW PLACE. YOU SAID, "JOLLY GOOD! BOB'S YOUR UNCLE!"
I HONESTLY DON'T BELIEVE I'VE EVER SAID--
I ASKED YOU TO DO ONE THING! ONE CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT THING THAT YOU AGREED TO! WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SCREWING IT UP?
I WISH
PART THREE

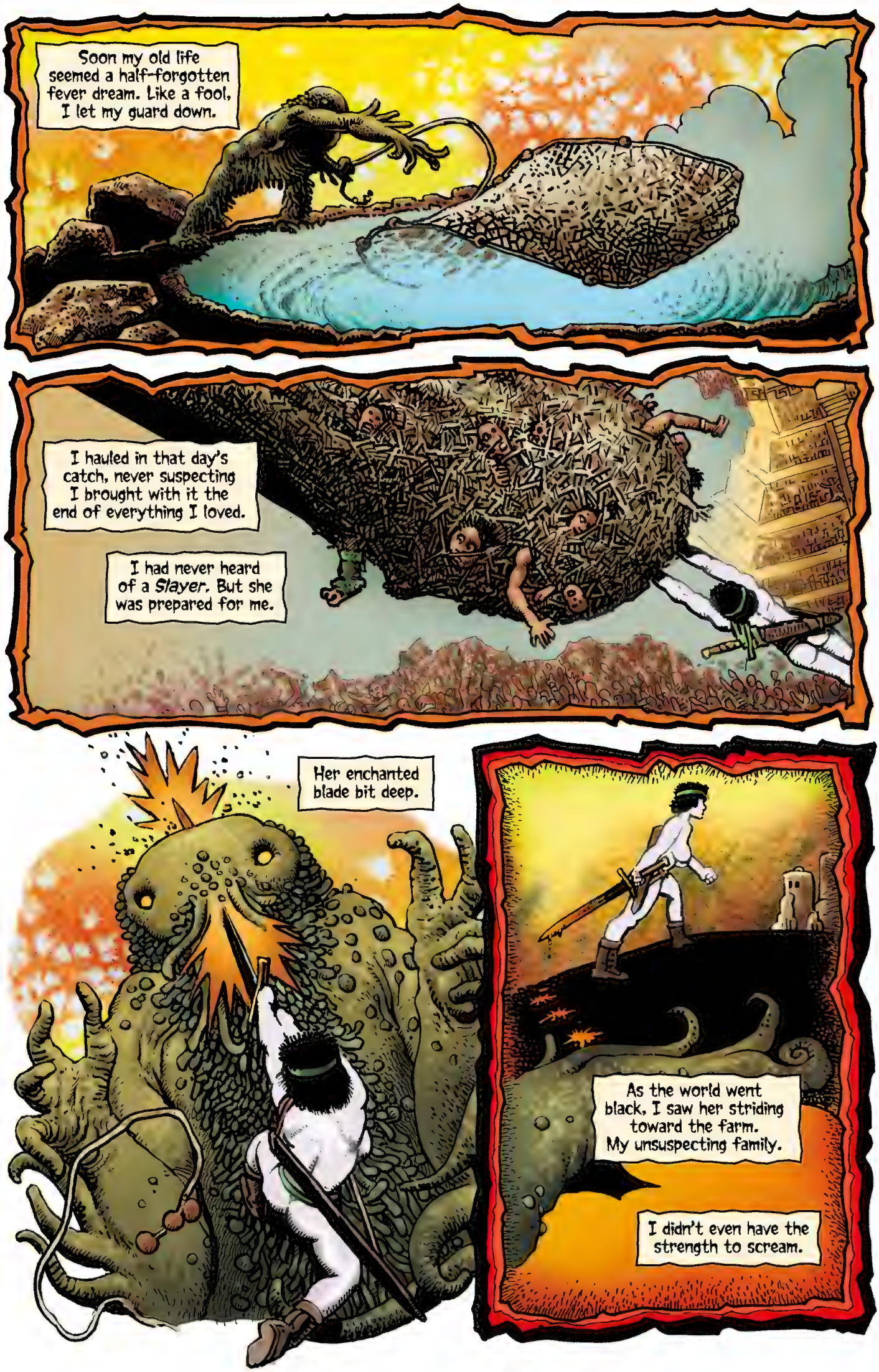

ACTUALLY, I'M NOT TRYING TO DEFLECT BLAME, BUT IT'S REALLY TOTALLY WILLOW'S FAULT. SHE SAID OUR PLACE WAS ALREADY PROTECTED!
IT WAS. IS. NO ONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO COME IN, LET ALONE LEAVE WITH THE BOOK, EXCEPT ONE OF US. I SENT DAWN TO GILES'S APARTMENT... MAYBE HE TOOK IT TO STUDY.
OR JUST TOOK IT. I LOVE THE GUY, BUT HE'S NOT THE WISE OLD MENTOR ANYMORE.
I MEAN, HE GETS KILLED, THEN RESURRECTED AS A PIMPLY HORMONAL ADOLESCE--
I WILL STACK MY ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOR AGAINST YOURS ANY DAY, XANDER. I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE THE BOOK IS. I CAN, HOWEVER, CONFIRM WILLOW'S SPELLS ARE INTACT.
OH, HEY, GILES!
THEN IT'S AN INSIDE JOB. LET'S PRIME SUSPECT IT, SHALL WE? WHO BENEFITS? WHO COULD USE THE BOOK'S POWERS FOR PERSONAL GAIN?
I ALSO NOMINATE THE FORMERLY MIDDLE-AGED LIBRARIAN WHO'S PROBABLY DESPERATE TO MAKE HIMSELF OLD ENOUGH FOR A LEGAL SHAG!
I'M HARDLY THE ONLY ONE WITH MOTIVE, SPIKE. BOTH DAWN AND XANDER WOULD LIKE TO REPAIR THEIR RELATIONSHIP BY RESTORING HER EMOTIONAL MEMORIES OF THE LAST FEW YEARS.
REALLY? YOU HAVE MOTIVE TOO?
XANDER, I DIDN'T ASK TO NOT BE IN LOVE WITH YOU ANYMORE.
OKAY, WAIT. LET'S NOT TURN ON EACH OTHER. WE'RE NOT REAL HOUSEWIVES.
ONE MOMENT.
EXIT THIS WAY
"HAS ANYONE SEEN ANDREW?"

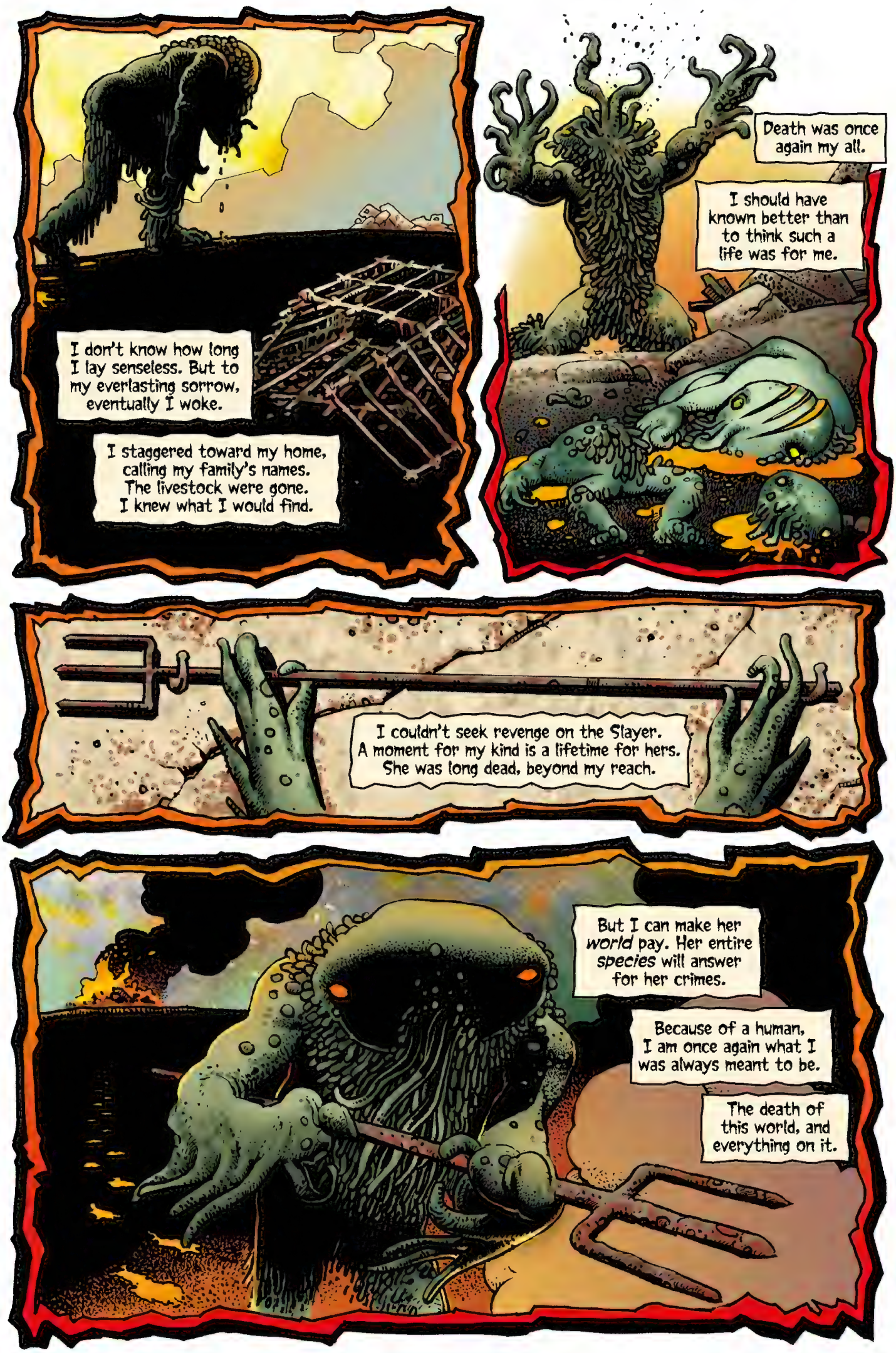

YOUR SPELL MADE ANDREW AN AUTHORIZED USER?
I--I JUST SAID "US." I DIDN'T SPECIFICALLY INCLUDE HIM.
YOU SHOULD'VE SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED HIM! HE ROOFIED ME AND PUT MY MIND IN A ROBOT BODY! HE WAS A SUPERVILLAIN! HIS SCUMBAG FRIEND WARREN--
KILLED TARA.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO REMIND ME.
OH, HONEY... JUST MAGIC MY MOUTH SHUT.
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. I THINK ANDREW MEANS WELL, BUT I DON'T REALLY TRUST HIM. I SHOULD'VE BEEN MORE CAREFUL.
WE OUGHT TO GIVE THE LITTLE SOD THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT. IF I WAS A BIG BAD LOOKIN' FOR A WEAK-WILLED WANKER TO MIND CONTROL, LOOK NO FURTHER.
OR ANDREW COULD'VE BEEN TRICKED. CONVINCED HE'S DOING SOMETHING GOOD. BAD GUYS ARE A DEVIOUS AND PERSUASIVE BUNCH.
XANDER, YOU WERE TRYING TO SAVE ME. NO ONE BLAMES YOU. NOW.
I SUGGEST WE FOCUS OUR EFFORTS ON THE BOOK ITSELF. WILLOW, THE TRACKING SIGIL WE PLACED--
YES! MAGIC G.P.S. WE CAN FIND OUT WHERE IT...THERE! HEADING SOUTH. TOWARD...
TOWARD SUNNYDALE.

SUNNYDALE'S NOT THERE ANYMORE. IT COLLAPSED INTO THE GROUND.
MORE ACCURATELY, INTO THE HELLMOUTH. WHICH IS MOST DEFINITELY STILL THERE.
I FEAR THIS LENDS CREDENCE TO THE THEORY THAT SOME MALEVOLENT INFLUENCE IS LURING ANDREW.
THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE. IT'S HALLOWEEN.
YES, WHEN THE POWERS OF DARKNESS ARE AT THEIR--
NO...I SAW THIS ONLINE. EVER SINCE THE SUPERNATURAL CAME OUT OF THE CLOSET, PEOPLE GO TO SUNNYDALE ON HALLOWEEN.
"THEY CALL IT 'A CELEBRATION OF THE OCCULT AT THE TOWN THAT PROVED ITS EXISTENCE.' THINK BURNING MAN WITH COSPLAY."
NAKED HIPPIES... AND ANDREW? HE STRIKES ME AS MORE THE CAT SHOW TYPE.
SO THIS IS THE FIRST HALLOWEEN SINCE MAGIC WAS RESTORED... AND THERE'S A BUNCH OF PEOPLE PARTYING ON A HELLMOUTH?
"THOSE LUNATICS JUST MADE THEMSELVES THE PERFECT SACRIFICE."


WE NEED TO GET AFTER ANDREW. NOW.
BUT NOT ALL OF US.
WHOA! HORROR MOVIE RULE NUMBER ONE-- NEVER SPLIT UP!
BUFFY--YOU, SPIKE, AND I MAKE A GREAT FIELD TEAM. BUT WE REALLY NEED SOMEONE DOING RESEARCH...FIGURING OUT WHO, OR WHAT, WE'RE UP AGAINST.
GOOD TO KNOW I'M STILL FREE TO PERFORM SOME ADULT ACTIVITIES.
XANDER, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WITH AN ACTUAL JOB. AND DAWN, YOU'VE GOT SCHOOL. WHEN YOU'RE NOT BUSY, HELP GILES.
YES! TOGETHER. BONDING MOMENTS. WITH THE LOOMING THREAT OF DEATH SPICING IT UP. THAT'S HOW ALL THE BEST MEMORIES ARE MADE.
AND SOMEHOW YOU'RE STILL SINGLE.
YOU SURE ABOUT THIS? WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE HELLMOUTH. WHERE THE BIG BIG BADS COME THROUGH.
BUT IF IT'S LURING ANDREW THERE, THIS PARTICULAR BIG BAD OBVIOUSLY NEEDS HELP. WE MOVE FAST, I BET WE CAN KEEP IT ON THE HELLISH SIDE OF THE BORDER.
AND IF YOU'RE TARDY?
THEN WE'LL BE FIGHTING A MEGAPOWERFUL HELL DEMON THAT CAN PROBABLY SLAUGHTER US IN ITS SLEEP.
OR, AS WE CALL IT, "WEDNESDAY."

Death was my all, back then.
I had many names. *The Soul Glutton. Damnation Made Flesh. The Slithering Doom.* I strode the mortal world like a colossus, leaving agony in my wake.
Fistfuls of mortals were my meat. Blood was my wine, and screams my song. I never thought I could want more.
Until I met *her.*
I can still see the soft undulation of her tentacles. Smell the subtle scent of corpse rot that always seemed to cling to her.
She calmed the blood lust in me. Made me want things I'd never given thought to before. Home. A *family.*
We retired to a quiet corner of our hell. Settled down...ran a blood farm. And for a brief, blissful time I was *happy.*


Soon my old life seemed a half-forgotten fever dream. Like a fool, I let my guard down.
I hauled in that day's catch, never suspecting I brought with it the end of everything I loved.
I had never heard of a *Slayer*. But she was prepared for me.
Her enchanted blade bit deep.
As the world went black, I saw her striding toward the farm. My unsuspecting family.
I didn't even have the strength to scream.


I don't know how long I lay senseless. But to my everlasting sorrow, eventually I woke.
I staggered toward my home, calling my family's names. The livestock were gone. I knew what I would find.
Death was once again my all.
I should have known better than to think such a life was for me.
I couldn't seek revenge on the Slayer. A moment for my kind is a lifetime for hers. She was long dead, beyond my reach.
But I can make her *world* pay. Her entire *species* will answer for her crimes.
Because of a human, I am once again what I was always meant to be.
The death of this world, and everything on it.

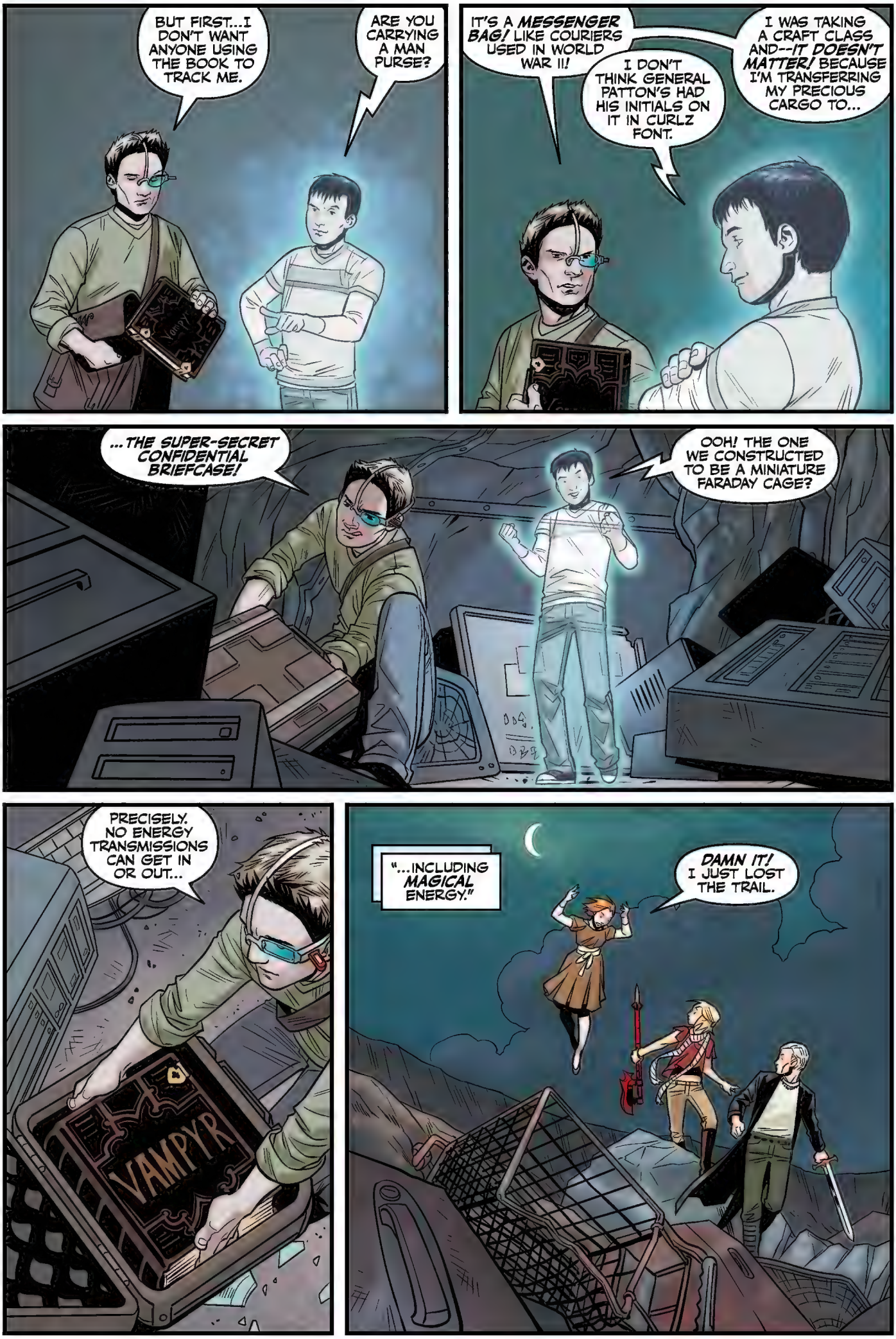
THE FORMER LOCATION OF SUNNYDALE.
NOT BAD, NOT BAD. I LIKE THE TRANSPOSITION OF THE CLASSIC WESTERN REVENGE STORY ONTO A HORROR PARADIGM. BUT I DO HAVE NOTES.
YOU MADE IT SOUND LIKE YOU WERE SOME HUGE GODZILLA MONSTER. BUT YOU'RE JUST THE SIZE OF A NORMAL DUDE.
I EXPENDED MUCH SOUL ENERGY TO TRAVEL TO THIS PLANE. MY STATURE WAS DIMINISHED ACCORDINGLY. AS I CONSUME SOULS, MY POWER WILL GROW.
OKAY, SEE, I CAN HANG WITH THAT. A LITTLE EXPOSITION HEAVY, BUT IT DOES RAISE THE STAKES.
YOU HAVE GOT TO GIVE ME YOUR RECIPE FOR SLIME.
I DUNNO, MAN.
I'M ASSUMING YOU'RE A MAN. THE VOICE.
WHY RAISE THE QUESTION AT ALL? WHY TEASE THE AUDIENCE WITH A PROMISE YOU CAN'T KEEP?
BUT I CAN KEEP IT.
I KEEP ALL MY PROMISES.
CHUNK

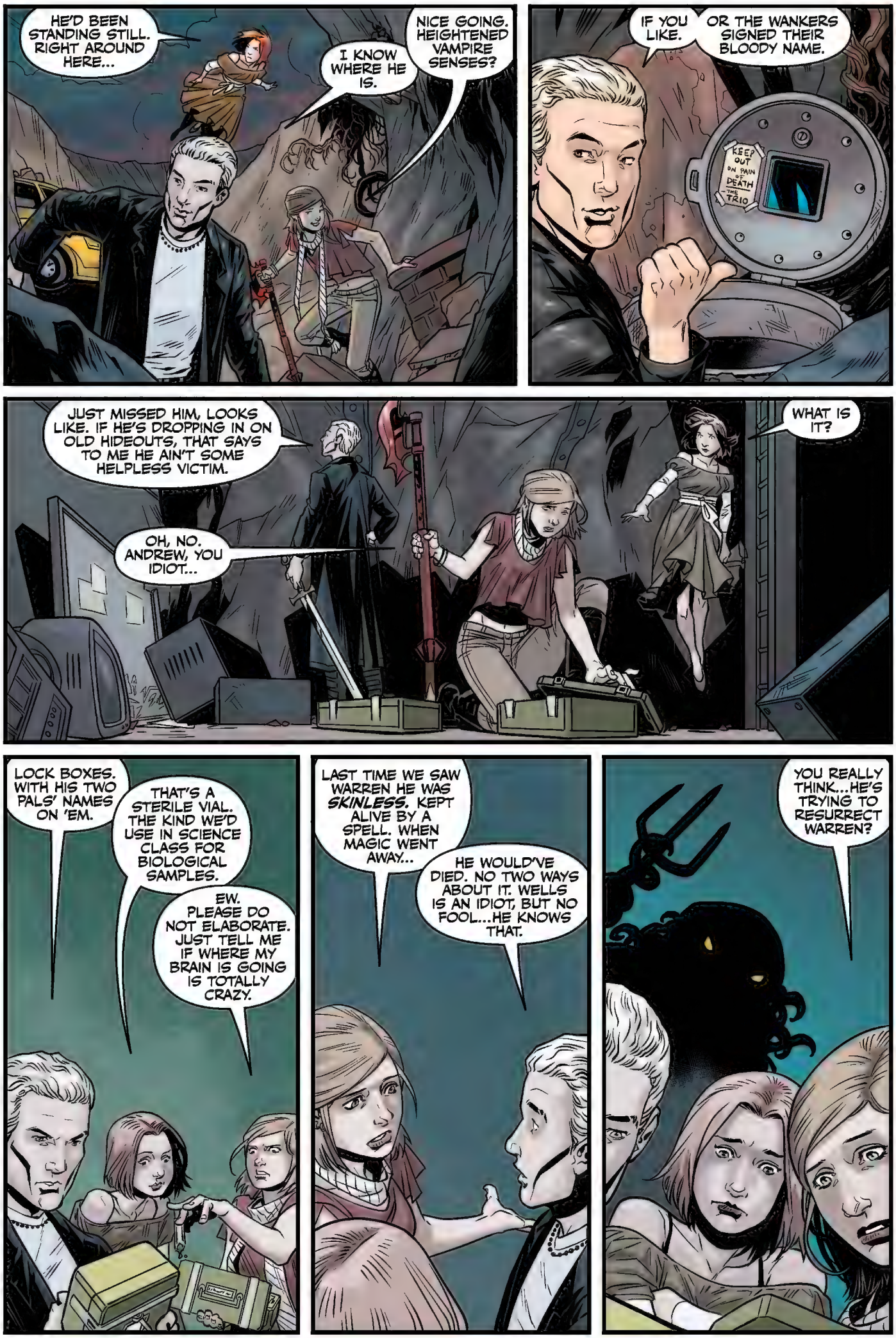
NEARBY.
AIIEEEE!
UGH. AGAIN WITH THE SCREAMING. I KNOW IT'S HALLOWEEN, BUT *CHANGE IT UP.* AN EVIL CACKLE, A GHOSTLY MOAN...
AH. CORRECT LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE...
...NOW LET'S HOPE CONTENTS HAVEN'T SHIFTED TOO MUCH.
YES! AT LAST!
AT LAST! HAHAHA HAHA!
NOW *THAT'S* AN EVIL CACKLE.

IT'S WORSE THAN I THOUGHT. WILLOW, CAN YOU MAKE ALL THESE PEOPLE LEAVE?
I'VE BEEN TRYING. BUT THAT'S THE KIND OF SUBTLE SPELL I HAVE A HARD TIME PULLING OFF WITH THIS RAW, NEW MAGIC WE'VE GOT NOW.
I COULD GO ALL BUMPY FACE, TRY TO SCARE 'EM AWAY.
HRAAA!
DUDE! OUTSTANDING WILLIAM THE BLOODY!
OH, YOU'RE A FAN?
OF THE MURDER. THE POETRY... GAK!
YOU WOULDN'T KNOW IAMBIC PENTAMETER IF IT BIT YOU ON THE ARSE, YOU PHILISTINE!
LET IT GO. DON'T FEED THE TROLLS.
AT LEAST THEY SEEM TO HAVE THE SENSE TO STAY OUT OF THE ACTUAL CRATER... AND MY TRACKING SPELL SAYS THAT'S WHERE WE'RE GOING.
WELCOME HOME.
WELCOME TO SUNNYDALE

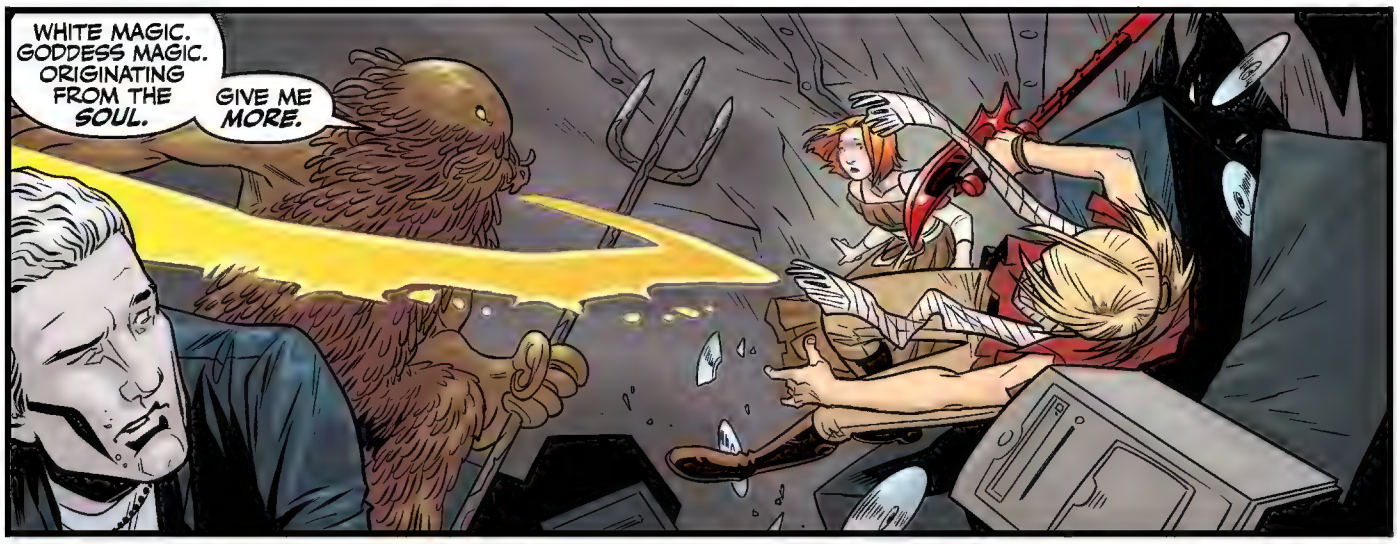
"EARTHQUAKE PROOF" MY BUTT. THAT BOMB-SHELTER SALESMAN TOTALLY RIPPED US OFF.
THE TRIO SECRET HIDEOUT #69. (YES, THEY'RE ALL #69.)
THIS PLACE IS ALMOST A TOTAL LOSS...
...ALMOST.
JONATHAN LEVINSON
D.N.A. SAMPLE INTACT. PERSONALITY DATABASE INTACT.
PLEASE WORK...

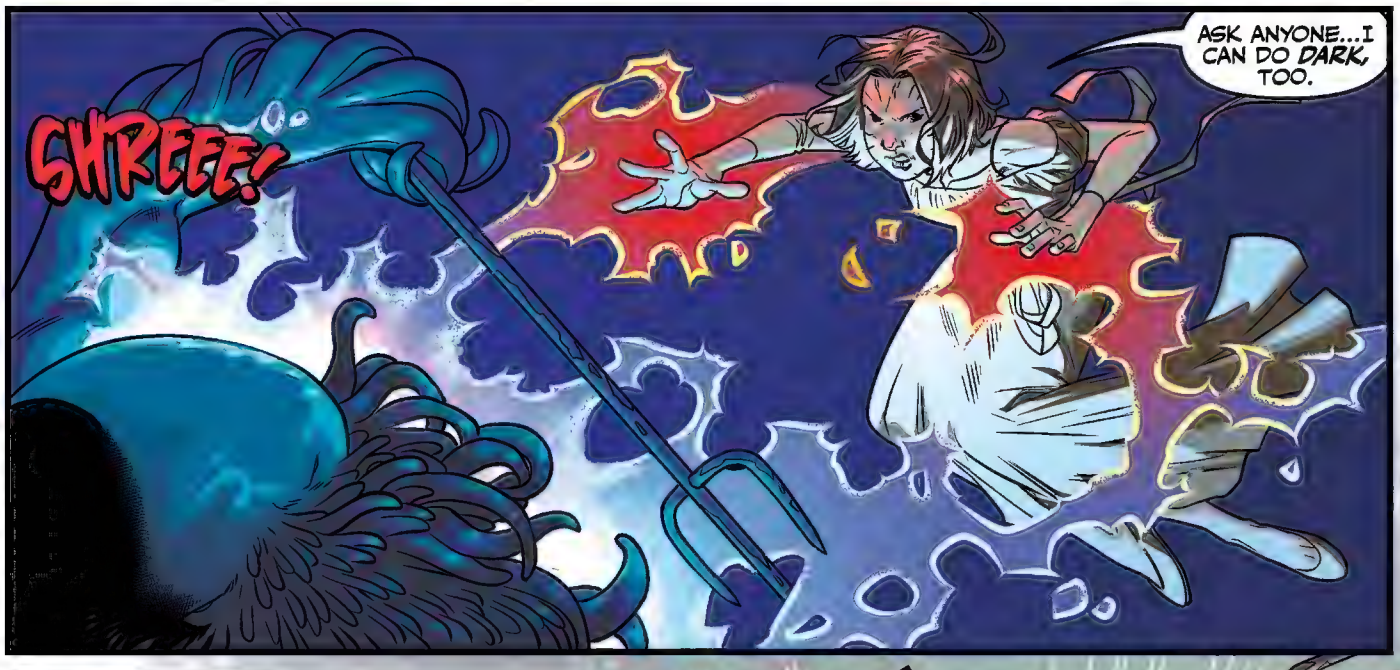
JONATHAN!
WHAT'S GOING ON? AM I DEAD? AM I IN THE MATRIX?
WE MADE DIGITIZED BACKUPS OF OUR CONSCIOUSNESS, LIKE ANY GOOD SUPERVILLAINS, REMEMBER?
THEN I'VE...FALLEN. HOW'D IT HAPPEN? IN GLORIOUS BATTLE? WAS I TREACHEROUSLY STRUCK DOWN BY A FEMME FATALE AFTER A NIGHT OF UNBRIDLED PASSION?
UM...I STABBED YOU.
WHAT? YOU JERK!
I WAS TOTALLY BEING MANIPULATED! LIKE WHEN LOKI MADE THE SILVER SURFER FIGHT THOR!
BUT I'M GONNA FIX IT. I'VE GOT YOUR D.N.A. SAMPLE HERE.
I NEVER USED IT BEFORE BECAUSE THE BEST I COULD'VE DONE IS MAKE A TEST-TUBE BABY, OR A ROBOT BODY. AND I'VE HAD...HICCUPS WITH THOSE.
BUT NOW MAGIC IS NEW AGAIN...RAW AND UNDEFINED. AND I'VE GOT THE POWER TO BEND IT TO MY WILL.
SOLD! LET'S GET STARTED.
WE WILL. JUST BEAR WITH ME.
THERE'S ONE MORE STOP ON THE RESURRECTION TOUR.
WARREN MEARS


BUT FIRST...I DON'T WANT ANYONE USING THE BOOK TO TRACK ME.
ARE YOU CARRYING A MAN PURSE?
IT'S A MESSENGER BAG! LIKE COURIERS USED IN WORLD WAR II!
I DON'T THINK GENERAL PATTON'S HAD HIS INITIALS ON IT IN CURLZ FONT.
I WAS TAKING A CRAFT CLASS AND--IT DOESN'T MATTER! BECAUSE I'M TRANSFERRING MY PRECIOUS CARGO TO...
...THE SUPER-SECRET CONFIDENTIAL BRIEFCASE!
OOH! THE ONE WE CONSTRUCTED TO BE A MINIATURE FARADAY CAGE?
PRECISELY. NO ENERGY TRANSMISSIONS CAN GET IN OR OUT...
VAMPYR
"...INCLUDING MAGICAL ENERGY."
DAMN IT! I JUST LOST THE TRAIL.


HE'D BEEN STANDING STILL. RIGHT AROUND HERE...
I KNOW WHERE HE IS.
NICE GOING. HEIGHTENED VAMPIRE SENSES?
IF YOU LIKE.
OR THE WANKERS SIGNED THEIR BLOODY NAME.
KEEP OUT ON PAIN OF DEATH THE TRIO
JUST MISSED HIM, LOOKS LIKE. IF HE'S DROPPING IN ON OLD HIDEOUTS, THAT SAYS TO ME HE AIN'T SOME HELPLESS VICTIM.
OH, NO. ANDREW, YOU IDIOT...
WHAT IS IT?
LOCK BOXES. WITH HIS TWO PALS' NAMES ON 'EM.
THAT'S A STERILE VIAL. THE KIND WE'D USE IN SCIENCE CLASS FOR BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES.
EW. PLEASE DO NOT ELABORATE. JUST TELL ME IF WHERE MY BRAIN IS GOING IS TOTALLY CRAZY.
LAST TIME WE SAW WARREN HE WAS SKINLESS. KEPT ALIVE BY A SPELL. WHEN MAGIC WENT AWAY...
HE WOULD'VE DIED. NO TWO WAYS ABOUT IT. WELLS IS AN IDIOT, BUT NO FOOL...HE KNOWS THAT.
YOU REALLY THINK...HE'S TRYING TO RESURRECT WARREN?

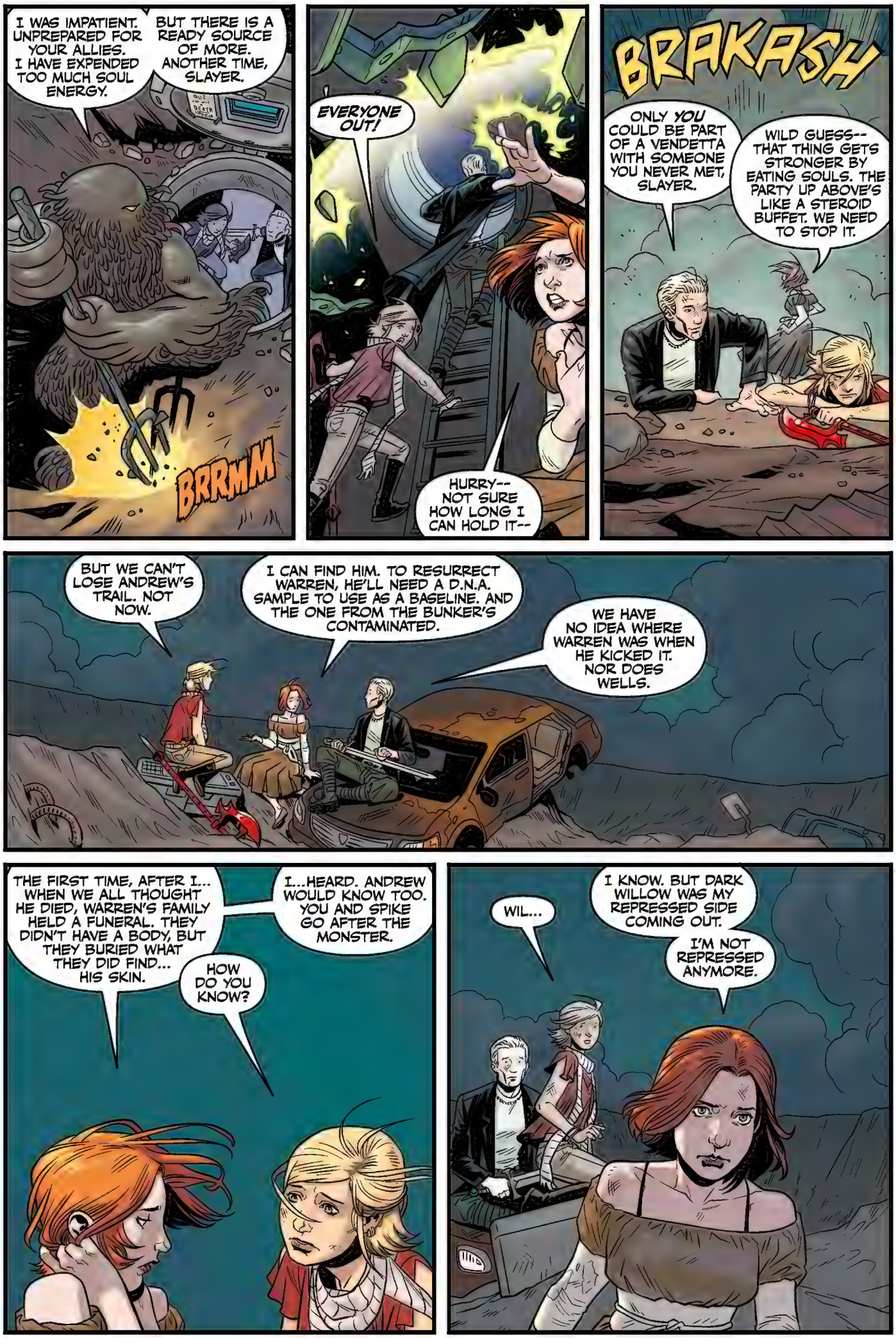
SLAYER! VENGEANCE IS MINE! YOUR SOUL IS MINE!!
SHNGG
LOOK OUT!!
FOR AGES I HAVE THIRSTED FOR YOUR DEATH!
OKAY, I MEET A LOT OF PEOPLE-- BUT I THINK I'D REMEMBER THAT FACE.
BLAGGH!
NOT YOU. YOUR KIND. YOU ARE THE CHOSEN. I SENSE THE ESSENCE OF ALL SLAYERS IN YOU. AND SO YOU MUST SUFFER.
GOT THAT BACKWARDS, YOU OFF-BRAND CTHULHU.
VVZARR


WHITE MAGIC. GODDESS MAGIC. ORIGINATING FROM THE SOUL.
GIVE ME MORE.

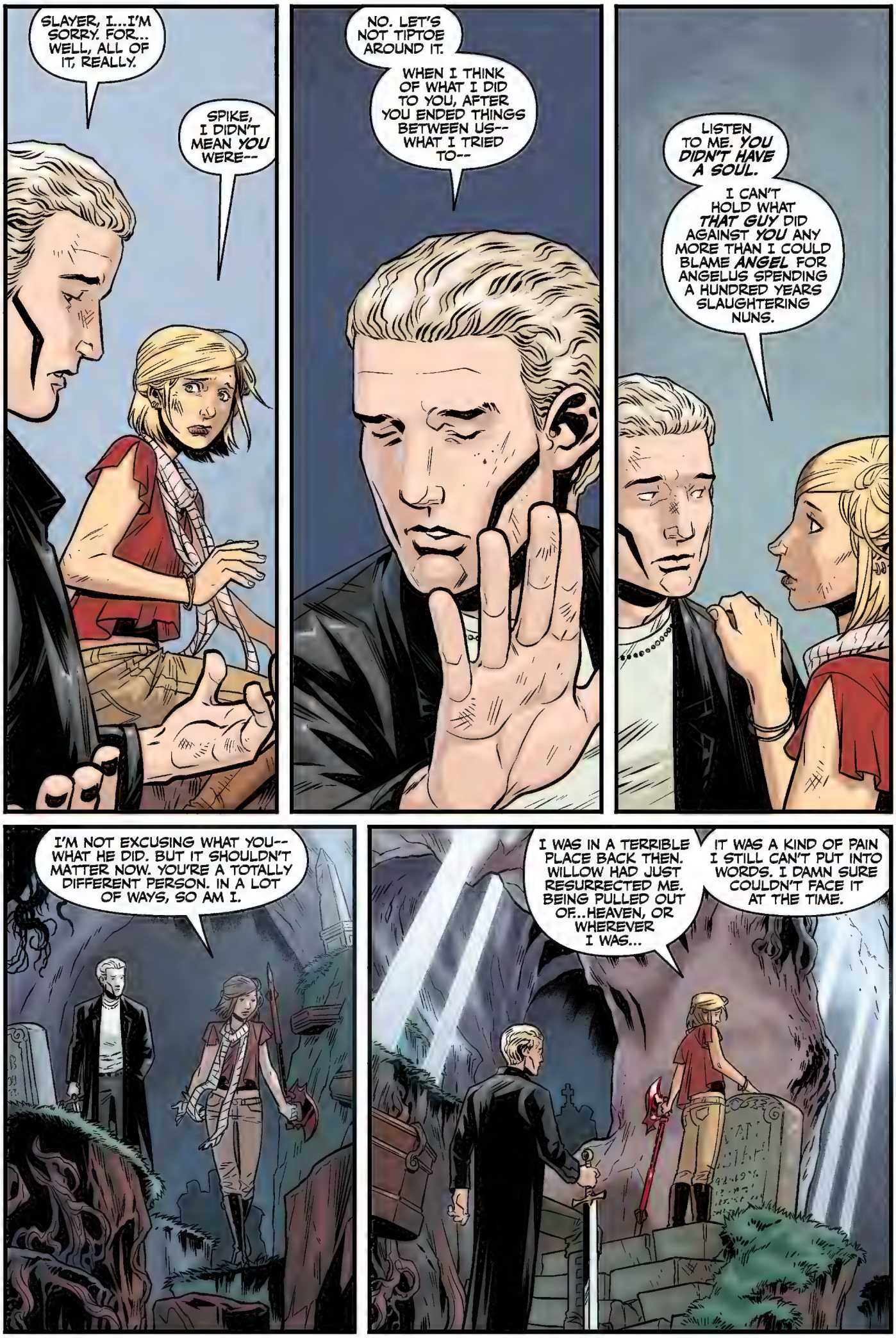

SHREEE!
ASK ANYONE...I CAN DO DARK, TOO.

I JUST DO MEAN.
SHHNK

NO! MY VENGEANCE WILL NOT BE DENIED!
KKRRZZZZ

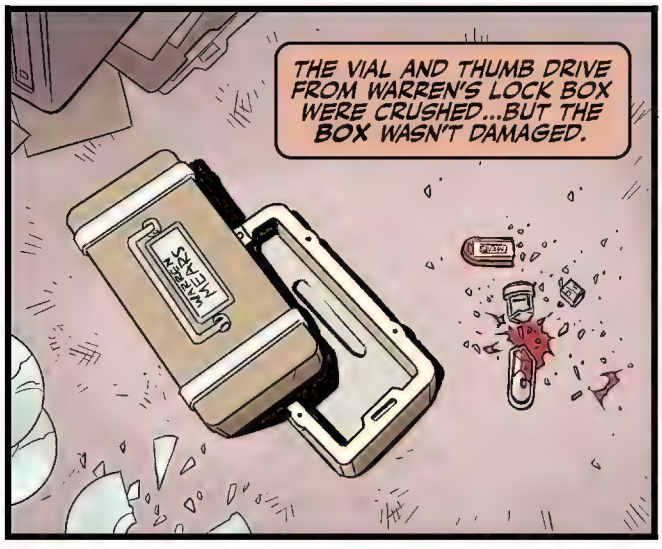

I WAS IMPATIENT. UNPREPARED FOR YOUR ALLIES. I HAVE EXPENDED TOO MUCH SOUL ENERGY.
BUT THERE IS A READY SOURCE OF MORE. ANOTHER TIME, SLAYER.
BRRMM
EVERYONE OUT!
HURRY-- NOT SURE HOW LONG I CAN HOLD IT--
BRAKASH
ONLY YOU COULD BE PART OF A VENDETTA WITH SOMEONE YOU NEVER MET, SLAYER.
WILD GUESS-- THAT THING GETS STRONGER BY EATING SOULS. THE PARTY UP ABOVE'S LIKE A STEROID BUFFET. WE NEED TO STOP IT.
BUT WE CAN'T LOSE ANDREW'S TRAIL. NOT NOW.
I CAN FIND HIM. TO RESURRECT WARREN, HE'LL NEED A D.N.A. SAMPLE TO USE AS A BASELINE. AND THE ONE FROM THE BUNKER'S CONTAMINATED.
WE HAVE NO IDEA WHERE WARREN WAS WHEN HE KICKED IT. NOR DOES WELLS.
THE FIRST TIME, AFTER I... WHEN WE ALL THOUGHT HE DIED, WARREN'S FAMILY HELD A FUNERAL. THEY DIDN'T HAVE A BODY, BUT THEY BURIED WHAT THEY DID FIND... HIS SKIN.
I...HEARD. ANDREW WOULD KNOW TOO. YOU AND SPIKE GO AFTER THE MONSTER.
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
WIL...
I KNOW. BUT DARK WILLOW WAS MY REPRESSED SIDE COMING OUT.
I'M NOT REPRESSED ANYMORE.

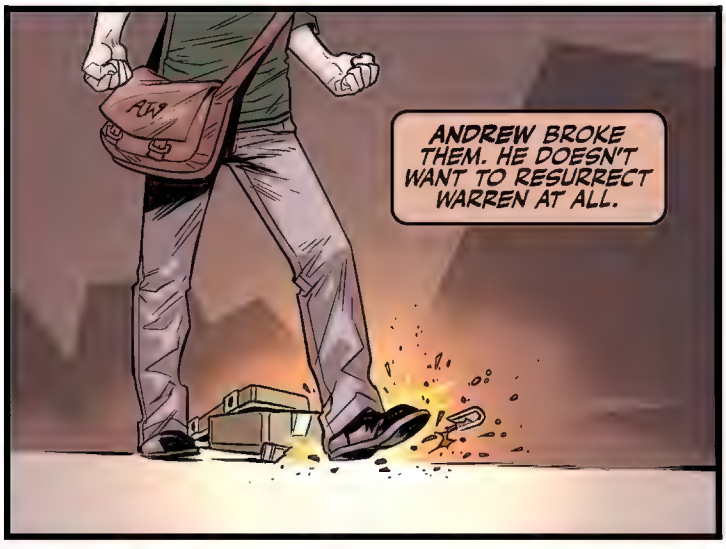
LATER.
BIG UGLY'S SLIPPED BELOW-GROUND...INTO THE OLD TUNNELS. USED TO LURK THERE MYSELF.
HOW ARE THEY NOT ALL COLLAPSED?
A LOT ARE, BUT THEY WERE STURDY, NOT TO MENTION DEEP. AND IT LOOKS LIKE OUR SLIMY MATE'S EXCAVATED WHOLE CHUNKS OF TOWN... RIGHT NICE BASE OF OPERATIONS.
THIS PART LOOKS FAMILIAR. I'D ALMOST SWEAR WE'RE NEAR...
I'LL BE DOUBLE DAMNED. MY OLD CRYPT...WHAT'S LEFT OF IT.
DON'T GET NOSTALGIC ON ME. WE'VE GOT A JOB TO DO.
NO FEAR ON THAT ACCOUNT. THERE'S A REASON I DIDN'T COME BACK HERE AFTER I GOT MY SOUL. I DON'T LIKE TO REMEMBER WHO I WAS THEN.
I GET THAT. BUT REMEMBERING YOUR MISTAKES...
...IS WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM MAKING THEM AGAIN.

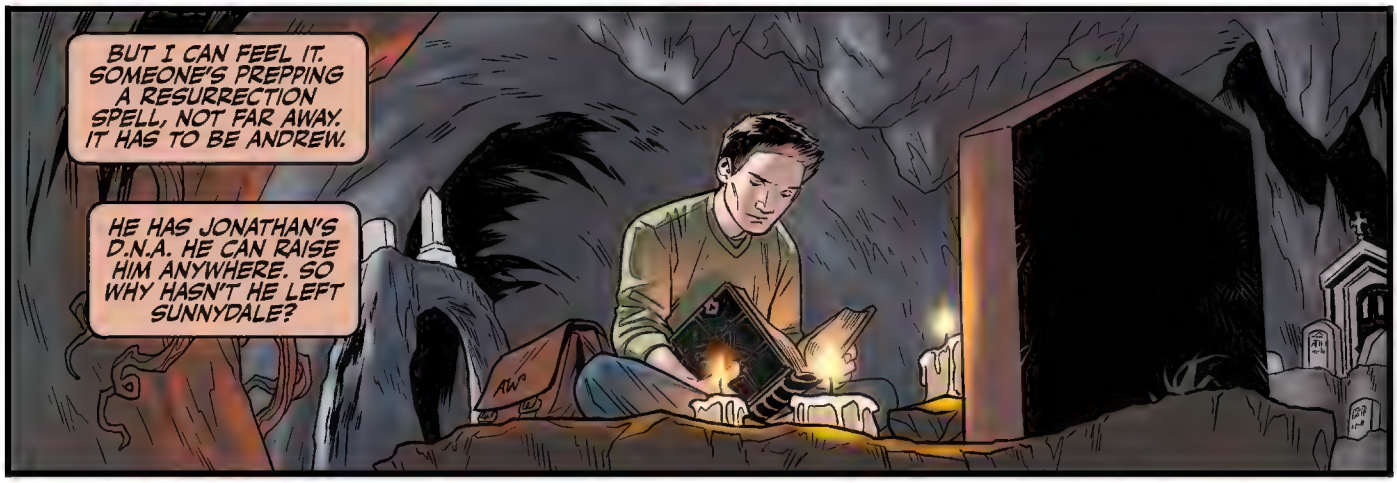

SLAYER, I...I'M SORRY. FOR... WELL, ALL OF IT, REALLY.
SPIKE, I DIDN'T MEAN *YOU* WERE--
NO. LET'S NOT TIPTOE AROUND IT.
WHEN I THINK OF WHAT I DID TO YOU, AFTER YOU ENDED THINGS BETWEEN US-- WHAT I TRIED TO--
LISTEN TO ME. *YOU DIDN'T HAVE A SOUL.*
I CAN'T HOLD WHAT *THAT GUY* DID AGAINST *YOU* ANY MORE THAN I COULD BLAME *ANGEL* FOR ANGELUS SPENDING A HUNDRED YEARS SLAUGHTERING NUNS.
I'M NOT EXCUSING WHAT YOU-- WHAT HE DID. BUT IT SHOULDN'T MATTER NOW. YOU'RE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON. IN A LOT OF WAYS, SO AM I.
I WAS IN A TERRIBLE PLACE BACK THEN. WILLOW HAD JUST RESURRECTED ME. BEING PULLED OUT OF...HEAVEN, OR WHEREVER I WAS...
IT WAS A KIND OF PAIN I STILL CAN'T PUT INTO WORDS. I DAMN SURE COULDN'T FACE IT AT THE TIME.

I COULDN'T BE MAD AT MY FRIENDS. THEY BROUGHT ME BACK 'CAUSE THEY LOVED ME.
SO I JUST HATED MYSELF.
AND DID WHATEVER I COULD TO *PUNISH* MYSELF. TO SINK AS LOW AS I FELT...
OH, GOD, THAT CAME OUT *SO* WRONG--
SKRITCH
WH--?
THIS BODY'S *FRESH.*
NOW.
SHALL WE TRY THAT AGAIN?

ELSEWHERE.
OKAY...
...SO I'M A WITCH, NOT SHERLOCK HOLMES. NO SIGN OF ANDREW... OR ANYONE ELSE. WAS I WRONG ABOUT--
WAIT.

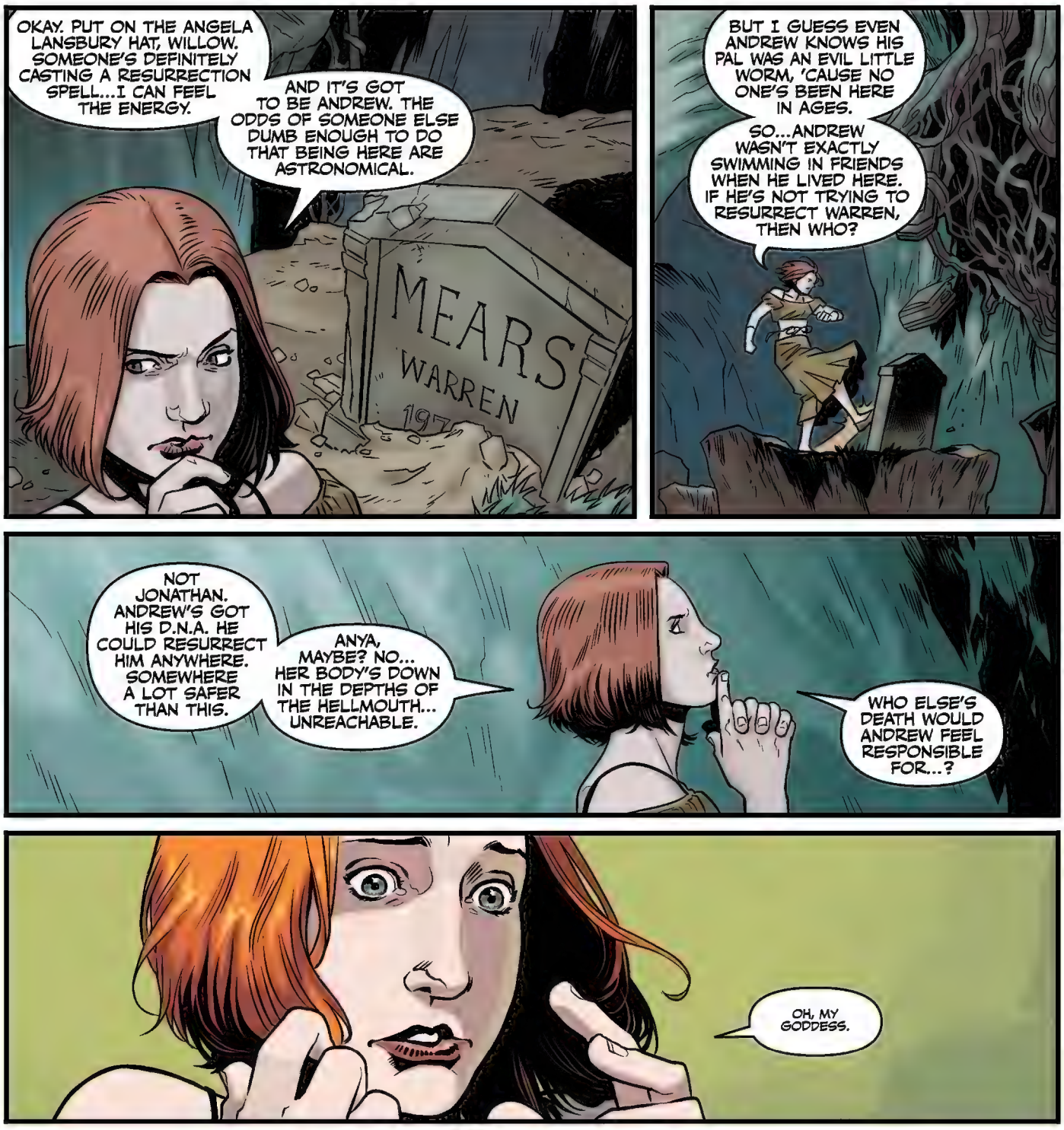

THE VIAL AND THUMB DRIVE FROM WARREN'S LOCK BOX WERE CRUSHED...BUT THE BOX WASN'T DAMAGED.

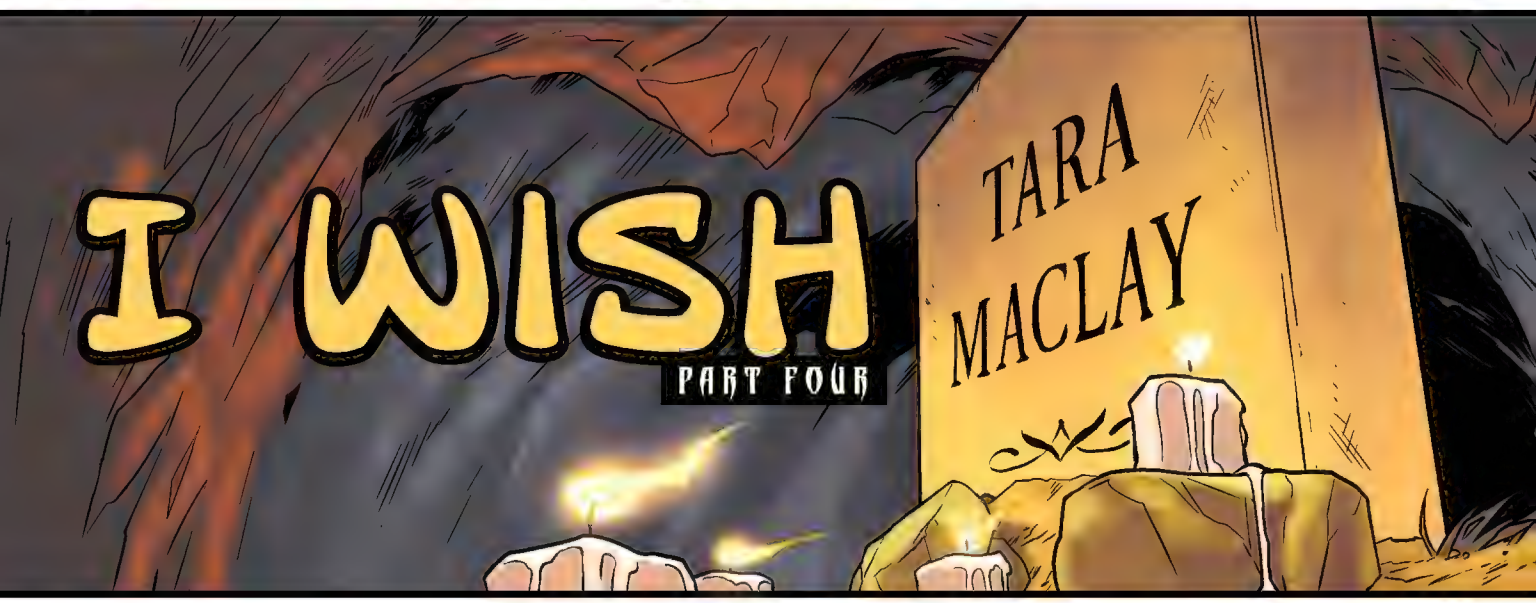

ANDREW BROKE THEM. HE DOESN'T WANT TO RESURRECT WARREN AT ALL.

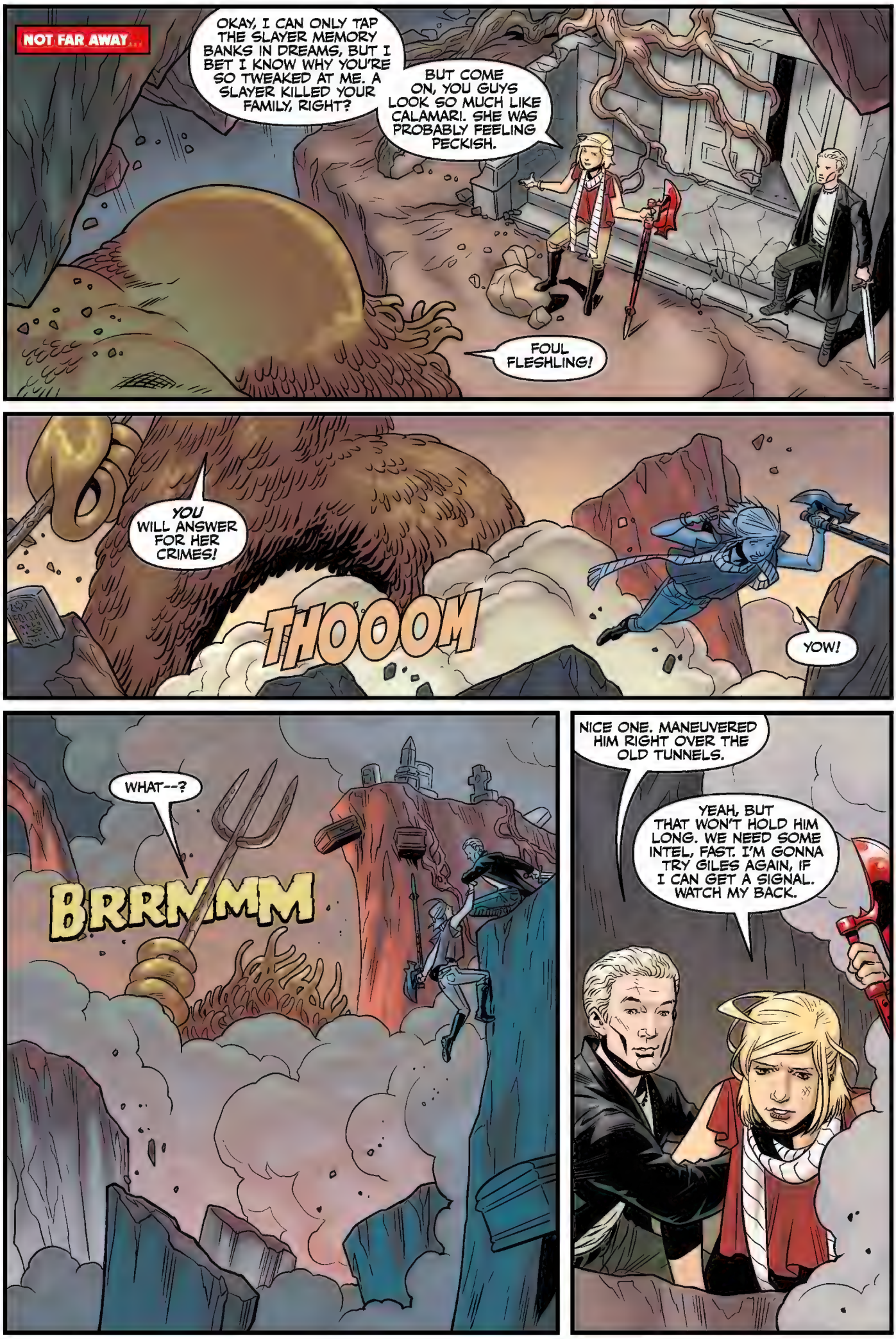

BUT I CAN FEEL IT. SOMEONE'S PREPPING A RESURRECTION SPELL, NOT FAR AWAY. IT HAS TO BE ANDREW.
HE HAS JONATHAN'S D.N.A. HE CAN RAISE HIM ANYWHERE. SO WHY HASN'T HE LEFT SUNNYDALE?

TARA MACLAY
WHAT AM I MISSING?

THE RUINS OF SUNNYDALE.
IT'S LIKE STABBING JELL-O! MAYBE IF WE TARGET HIS EYES?
I'M TRYING, BUT THE BUGGER'S TWICE AS BIG AND TEN TIMES AS TOUGH! HOW MANY BLOODY SOULS CAN A DEMON EAT IN AN HOUR?
HUNDREDS, FOOL. THE NAME SOUL GLUTTON IS WELL EARNED. BUT SOMETHING MORE EMPOWERS ME NOW.
A PURE SOUL ENERGY. INFUSED WITH THE HOLY LIGHT OF THE HEREAFTER.
SPANG
WAIT--IT'S TALKING ABOUT ANDREW'S DAFT PLAN TO RESURRECT WARREN, INNIT? I DON'T FIGURE THERE'S MUCH HOLY LIGHT WHERE THAT MISERABLE BASTARD ENDED UP.
THOOOM
LESS TALKY! MORE STABBY!
WE JUST NEED TO HOLD OUT A WHILE. WILLOW'S ON HER WAY TO STOP ANDREW. SHE'LL COME THROUGH...
...SHE ALWAYS DOES.

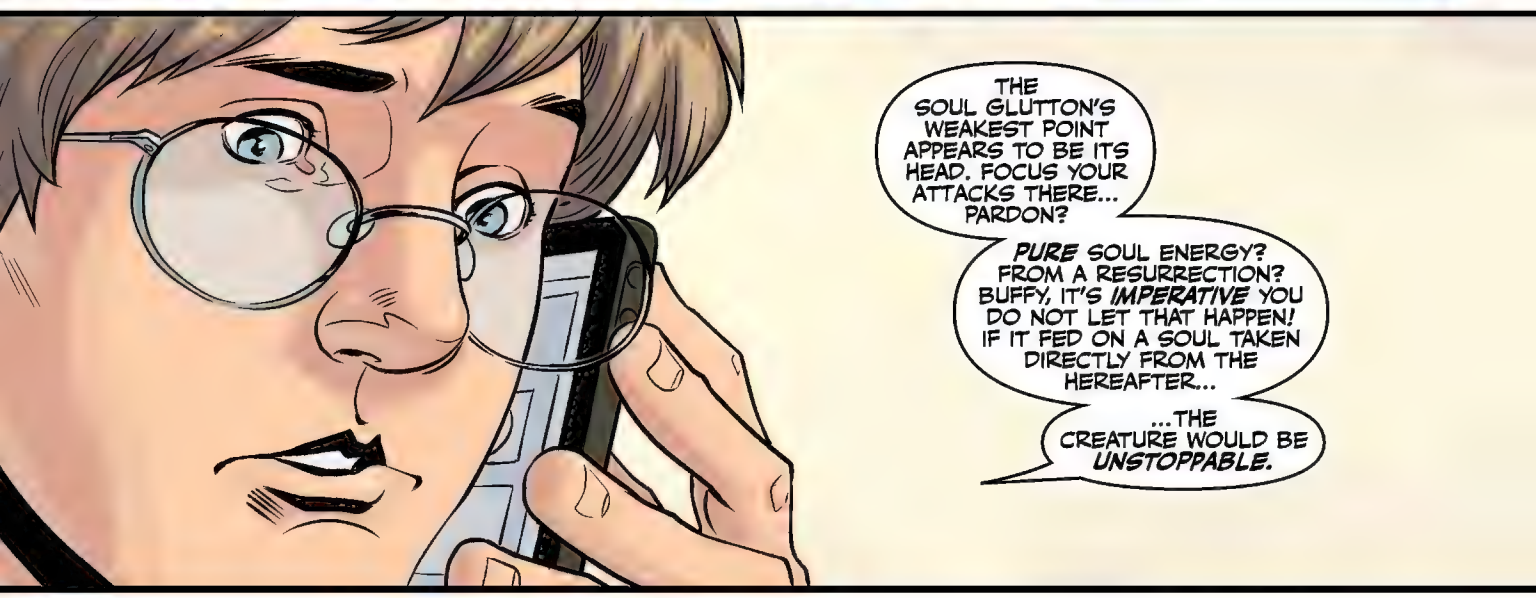

OKAY. PUT ON THE ANGELA LANSBURY HAT, WILLOW. SOMEONE'S DEFINITELY CASTING A RESURRECTION SPELL...I CAN FEEL THE ENERGY.
AND IT'S GOT TO BE ANDREW. THE ODDS OF SOMEONE ELSE DUMB ENOUGH TO DO THAT BEING HERE ARE ASTRONOMICAL.
MEARS
WARREN
BUT I GUESS EVEN ANDREW KNOWS HIS PAL WAS AN EVIL LITTLE WORM, 'CAUSE NO ONE'S BEEN HERE IN AGES.
SO...ANDREW WASN'T EXACTLY SWIMMING IN FRIENDS WHEN HE LIVED HERE. IF HE'S NOT TRYING TO RESURRECT WARREN, THEN WHO?
NOT JONATHAN. ANDREW'S GOT HIS D.N.A. HE COULD RESURRECT HIM ANYWHERE. SOMEWHERE A LOT SAFER THAN THIS.
ANYA, MAYBE? NO... HER BODY'S DOWN IN THE DEPTHS OF THE HELLMOUTH... UNREACHABLE.
WHO ELSE'S DEATH WOULD ANDREW FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR...?
OH, MY GODDESS.

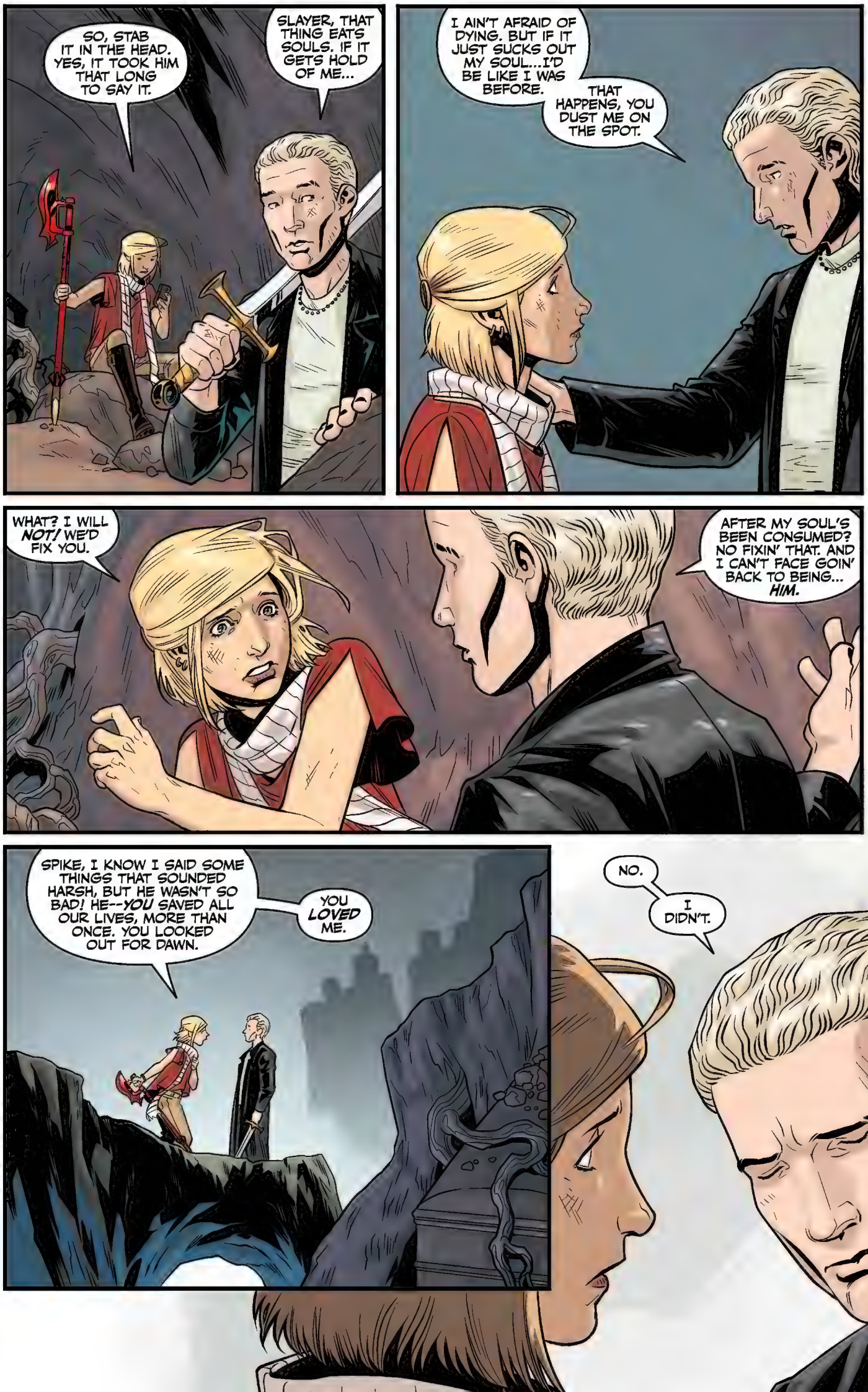

I WISH
PART FOUR
TARA MACLAY


NOT FAR AWAY...
OKAY, I CAN ONLY TAP THE SLAYER MEMORY BANKS IN DREAMS, BUT I BET I KNOW WHY YOU'RE SO TWEAKED AT ME. A SLAYER KILLED YOUR FAMILY, RIGHT?
BUT COME ON, YOU GUYS LOOK SO MUCH LIKE CALAMARI. SHE WAS PROBABLY FEELING PECKISH.
FOUL FLESHLING!
YOU WILL ANSWER FOR HER CRIMES!
THOOOM
YOW!
WHAT--?
BRRMMM
NICE ONE. MANEUVERED HIM RIGHT OVER THE OLD TUNNELS.
YEAH, BUT THAT WON'T HOLD HIM LONG. WE NEED SOME INTEL, FAST. I'M GONNA TRY GILES AGAIN, IF I CAN GET A SIGNAL. WATCH MY BACK.

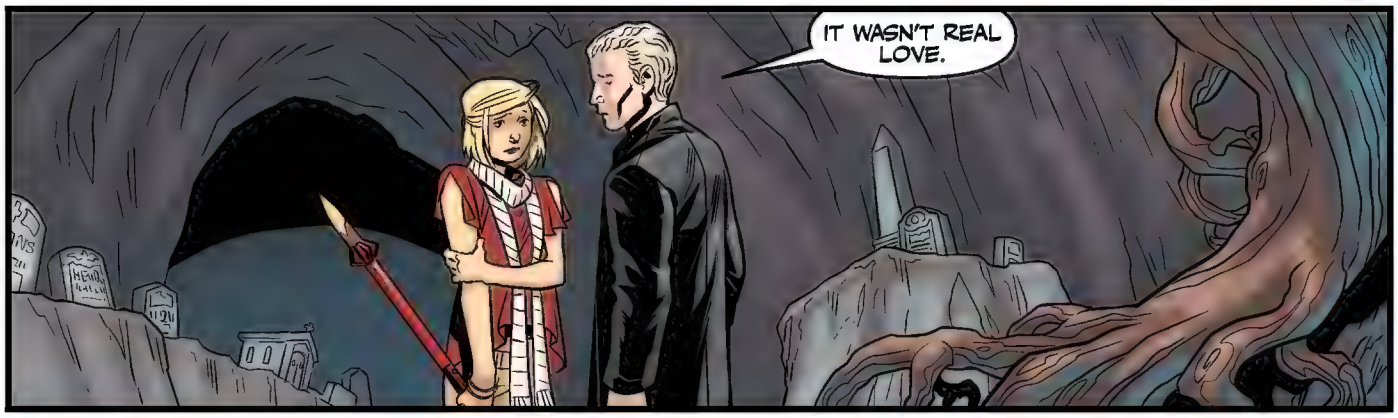
APARTMENT OF RUPERT GILES.
STILL IN THE CRATER? REALLY? YOU'RE CLEAR AS A BELL. I MAY HAVE TO REVISE MY OPINION OF OUR CARRIER.
YES, YES, OF COURSE, THE SOUL GLUTTON. I HAVE FOUND SOMETHING SINCE YOU LAST CALLED.
IT'S REFERENCED AS A PREDATORY DEATH GOD BY VARIOUS CULTURES. THE LAST MENTION IS IN THE RECORDS OF THE AZTECS, CIRCA THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.
A WARRIOR PRINCESS--THAT WOULD BE THE SLAYER OF THE TIME, I'D IMAGINE--JOURNEYED TO ITS NATIVE HELL AND KILLED IT, ALONG WITH ALL ITS KIND.
CLEARLY THE MATTER WAS NOT AS FINAL AS IT SEEMED.

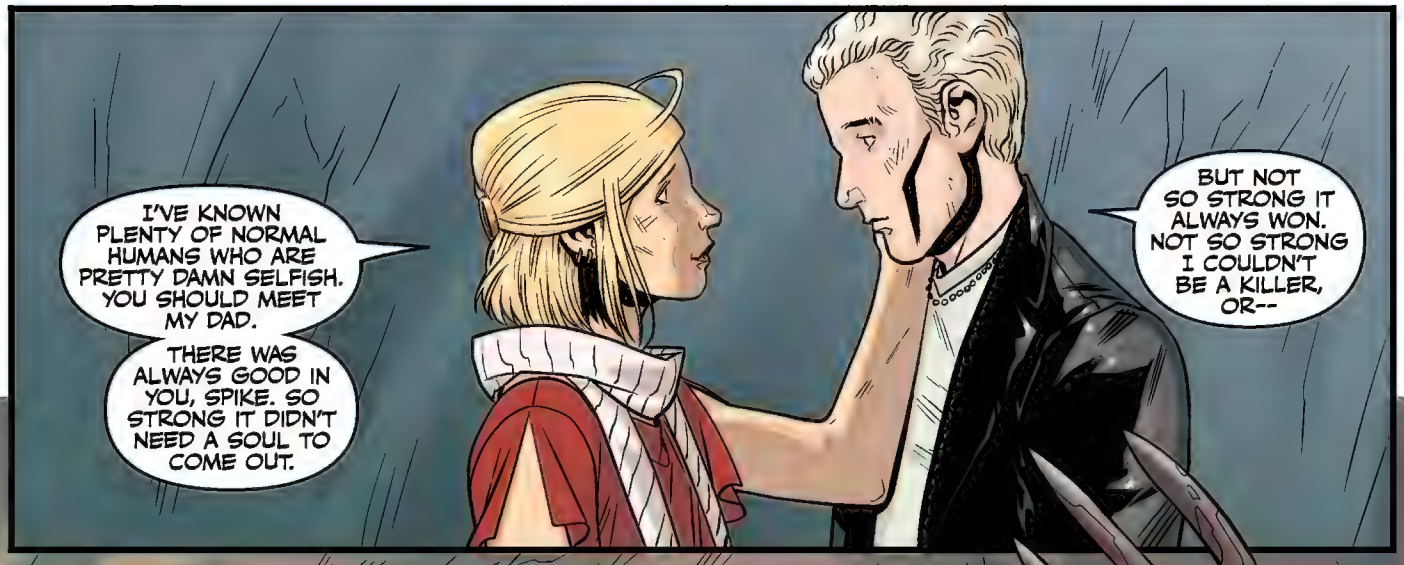
IT DOES FEED ON SOULS, AS YOU SURMISED. THE AZTEC SLAYER KILLED IT USING A MAGIC SWORD THAT DRAINED ITS ENERGY.
SADLY, THE SWORD WAS DESTROYED IN THE SPANISH CONQUEST. GIVEN ITS MYSTICAL PROPERTIES, YOUR SCYTHE IS LIKELY THE BEST SUBSTITUTE AT HAND.


THE SOUL GLUTTON'S WEAKEST POINT APPEARS TO BE ITS HEAD. FOCUS YOUR ATTACKS THERE... PARDON?
PURE SOUL ENERGY? FROM A RESURRECTION? BUFFY, IT'S *IMPERATIVE* YOU DO NOT LET THAT HAPPEN! IF IT FED ON A SOUL TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM THE HEREAFTER...
...THE CREATURE WOULD BE *UNSTOPPABLE.*


SO, STAB IT IN THE HEAD. YES, IT TOOK HIM THAT LONG TO SAY IT.
SLAYER, THAT THING EATS SOULS. IF IT GETS HOLD OF ME...
I AIN'T AFRAID OF DYING. BUT IF IT JUST SUCKS OUT MY SOUL...I'D BE LIKE I WAS BEFORE.
THAT HAPPENS, YOU DUST ME ON THE SPOT.
WHAT? I WILL *NOT!* WE'D FIX YOU.
AFTER MY SOUL'S BEEN CONSUMED? NO FIXIN' THAT. AND I CAN'T FACE GOIN' BACK TO BEING... *HIM.*
SPIKE, I KNOW I SAID SOME THINGS THAT SOUNDED HARSH, BUT HE WASN'T SO BAD! HE--*YOU* SAVED ALL OUR LIVES, MORE THAN ONCE. YOU LOOKED OUT FOR DAWN.
YOU *LOVED* ME.
NO.
I DIDN'T.

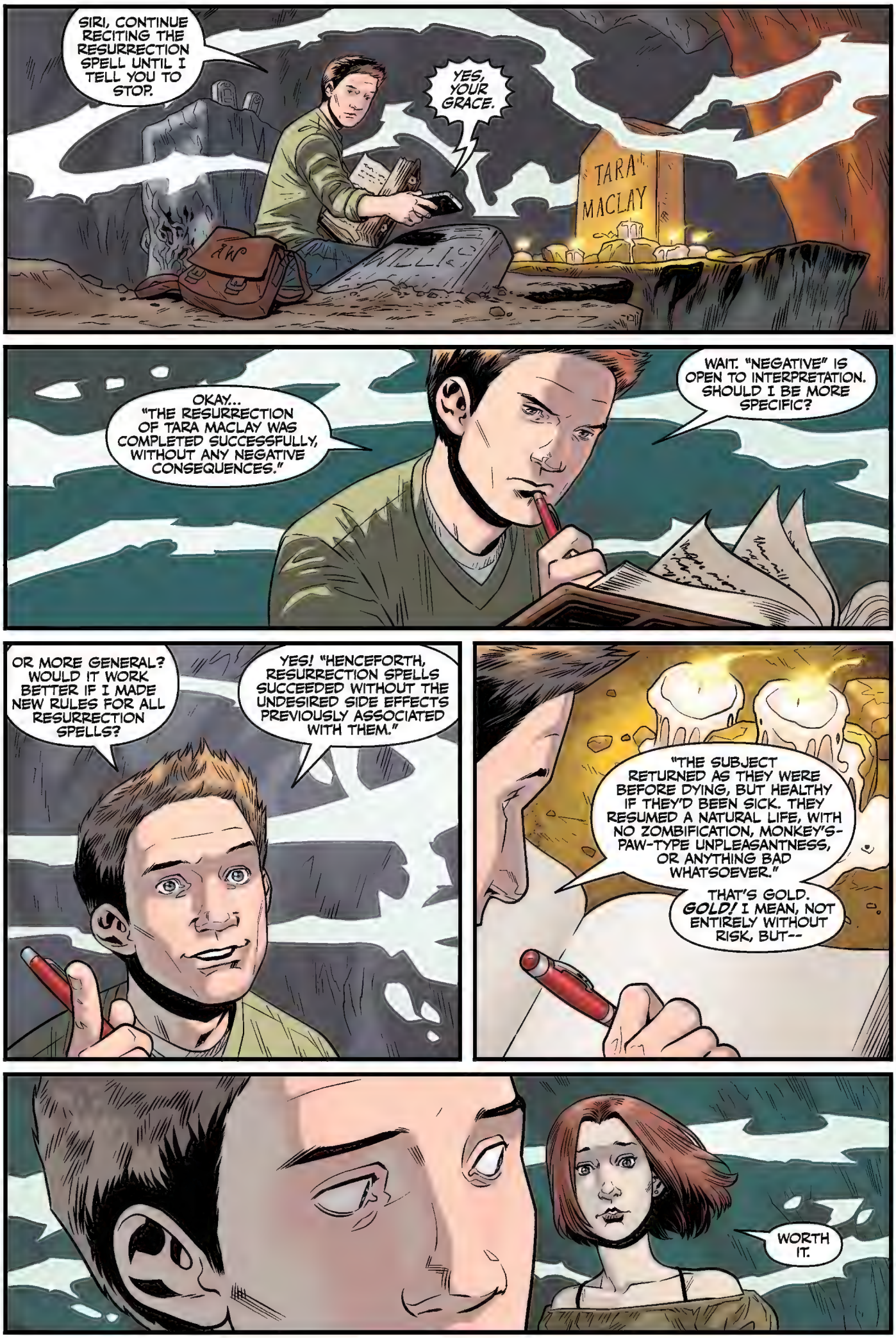
I *THOUGHT* I DID. WOULD'VE SWORN IT UP AND DOWN. BUT IT WAS A SELFISH BASTARDIZATION OF LOVE.
THE KIND THAT WOULDN'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER. THAT COULDN'T ACCEPT NOT HAVIN' YOU, EVEN IF IT WAS BEST FOR YOU. IT WAS NOTHIN' LIKE WHAT I--

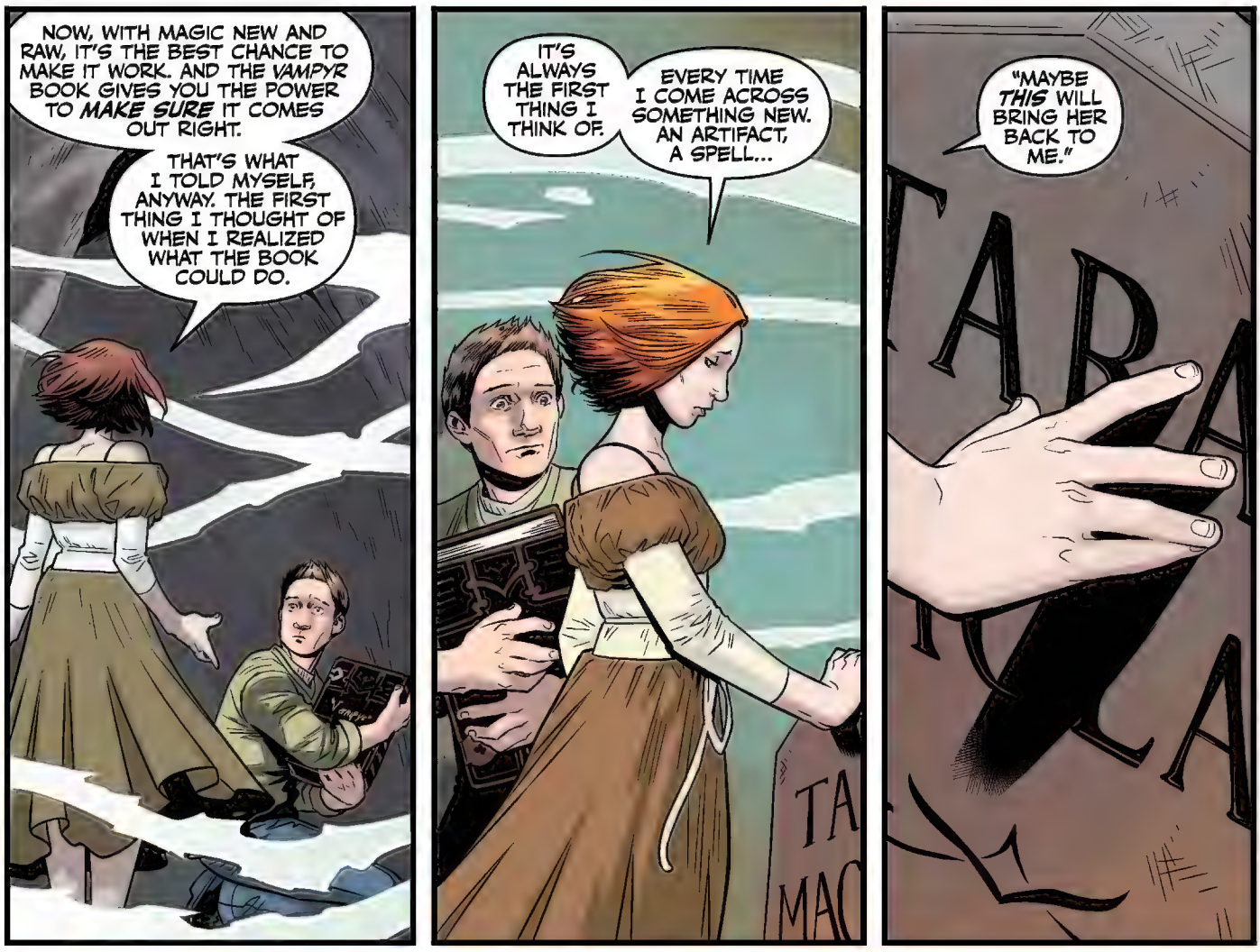

IT WASN'T REAL LOVE.


I'VE KNOWN PLENTY OF NORMAL HUMANS WHO ARE PRETTY DAMN SELFISH. YOU SHOULD MEET MY DAD.
THERE WAS ALWAYS GOOD IN YOU, SPIKE. SO STRONG IT DIDN'T NEED A SOUL TO COME OUT.
BUT NOT SO STRONG IT ALWAYS WON. NOT SO STRONG I COULDN'T BE A KILLER, OR--

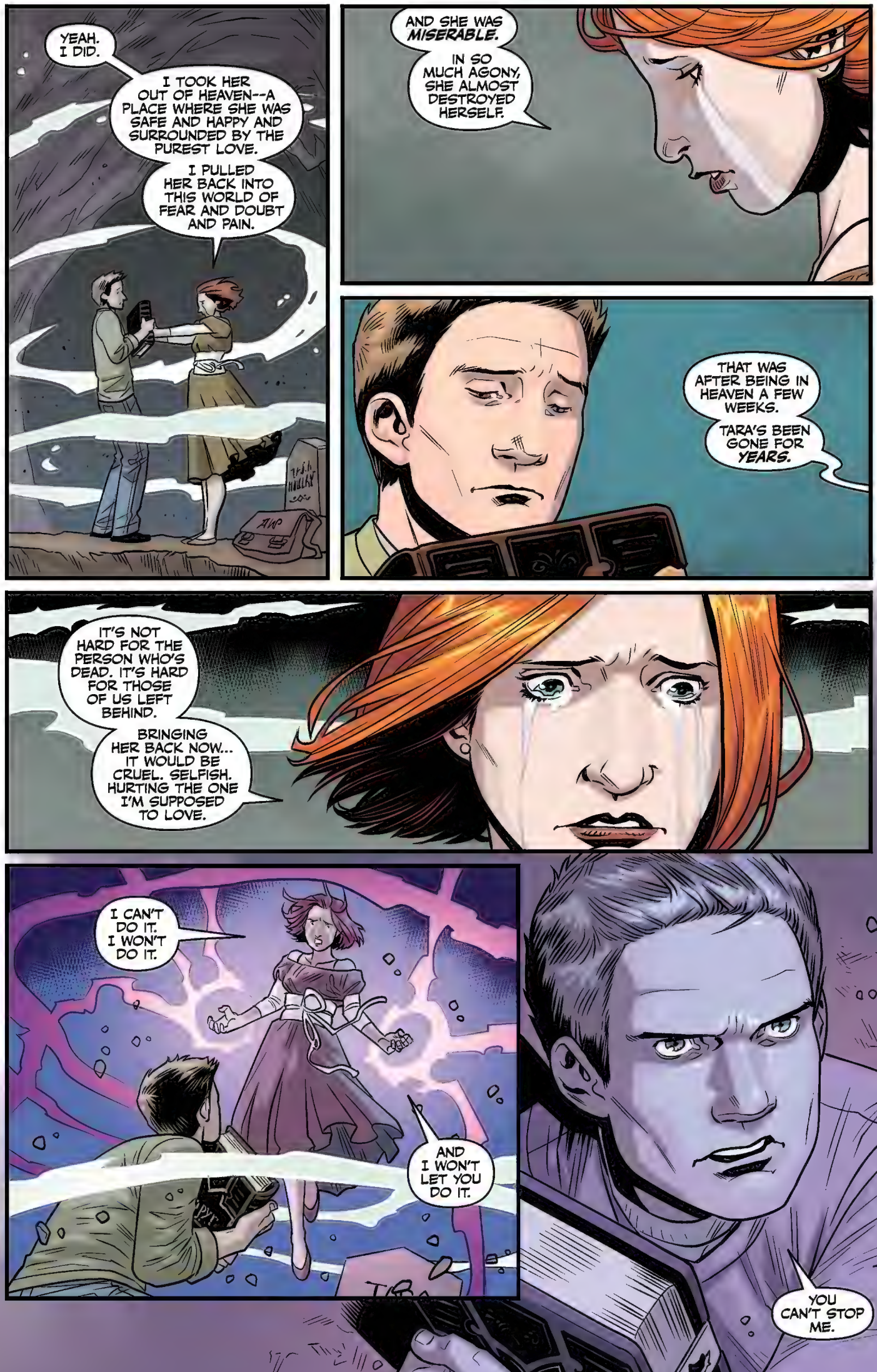
HROOAARR!
POINT THE KILLER AT *HIM*.

QUICK! IN THE HEAD!
SHLUKK
FOOLS.
AH, CRAP.
YOU ARE NO THREAT TO ME NOW!
THAT RESURRECTION SPELL'S CHARGING HIM UP LIKE POPEYE WITH SPINACH.
TYPICAL ANDREW. HE'S GONNA GET US ALL KILLED...AND HIS RESURRECTEE *EATEN.* THE ONLY SILVER LINING IS, IF THAT'S GOTTA HAPPEN TO SOMEONE, I'M GLAD IT'S WARREN...


SIRI, CONTINUE RECITING THE RESURRECTION SPELL UNTIL I TELL YOU TO STOP.
YES, YOUR GRACE.
TARA MACLAY
OKAY... "THE RESURRECTION OF TARA MACLAY WAS COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY, WITHOUT ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES."
WAIT. "NEGATIVE" IS OPEN TO INTERPRETATION. SHOULD I BE MORE SPECIFIC?
OR MORE GENERAL? WOULD IT WORK BETTER IF I MADE NEW RULES FOR ALL RESURRECTION SPELLS?
YES! "HENCEFORTH, RESURRECTION SPELLS SUCCEEDED WITHOUT THE UNDESIRED SIDE EFFECTS PREVIOUSLY ASSOCIATED WITH THEM."
"THE SUBJECT RETURNED AS THEY WERE BEFORE DYING, BUT HEALTHY IF THEY'D BEEN SICK. THEY RESUMED A NATURAL LIFE, WITH NO ZOMBIFICATION, MONKEY'S-PAW-TYPE UNPLEASANTNESS, OR ANYTHING BAD WHATSOEVER."
THAT'S GOLD. GOLD! I MEAN, NOT ENTIRELY WITHOUT RISK, BUT--
WORTH IT.


NOW, WITH MAGIC NEW AND RAW, IT'S THE BEST CHANCE TO MAKE IT WORK. AND THE VAMPYR BOOK GIVES YOU THE POWER TO MAKE SURE IT COMES OUT RIGHT.
THAT'S WHAT I TOLD MYSELF, ANYWAY. THE FIRST THING I THOUGHT OF WHEN I REALIZED WHAT THE BOOK COULD DO.
IT'S ALWAYS THE FIRST THING I THINK OF.
EVERY TIME I COME ACROSS SOMETHING NEW. AN ARTIFACT, A SPELL...
"MAYBE THIS WILL BRING HER BACK TO ME."
BUT IT WON'T. IT CAN'T.
AND THAT... THAT'S HOW IT SHOULD BE.
ANDREW, I APPRECIATE WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO. BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET IT HAPPEN. AND I DON'T HAVE TIME TO EXPLAIN WHY.
NO!
ZZRRAKK
GUHH!

MAGIC BACKFIRE. I PUT PROTECTIVE WARDS ON MY PHONE. AND THE BOOK ALREADY HAD THEM. YOU CAN'T DISRUPT THE SPELL.
B-BUT YOU CAN? ANDREW, PLEASE, YOU *HAVE* TO.
WHY?
IT'S A NEW DAY. WE DON'T HAVE TO LIVE BY SOME STUPID LAWS A PATRIARCHY OF STUFFY OLD WIZARDS MADE THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO.
WE MAKE THE RULES NOW! WE CAN GET IT RIGHT! HOW THINGS SHOULD REALLY BE!
I CAN MAKE UP FOR WHAT WE DID TO HER.
WHAT WE DID TO *YOU.*
GODDESS, I MISS HER SO MUCH...
THEN *HELP* ME! I MEAN, YOU'VE DONE IT BEFORE.
YOU BROUGHT *BUFFY* BACK!


YEAH. I DID.
I TOOK HER OUT OF HEAVEN--A PLACE WHERE SHE WAS SAFE AND HAPPY AND SURROUNDED BY THE PUREST LOVE.
I PULLED HER BACK INTO THIS WORLD OF FEAR AND DOUBT AND PAIN.
AND SHE WAS MISERABLE.
IN SO MUCH AGONY, SHE ALMOST DESTROYED HERSELF.
THAT WAS AFTER BEING IN HEAVEN A FEW WEEKS.
TARA'S BEEN GONE FOR YEARS.
IT'S NOT HARD FOR THE PERSON WHO'S DEAD. IT'S HARD FOR THOSE OF US LEFT BEHIND.
BRINGING HER BACK NOW... IT WOULD BE CRUEL. SELFISH. HURTING THE ONE I'M SUPPOSED TO LOVE.
I CAN'T DO IT. I WON'T DO IT.
AND I WON'T LET YOU DO IT.
YOU CAN'T STOP ME.

KRNCH
NNUHH!
SLAYER!
THAT'S IT. I DON'T CARE HOW MANY SOULS YOU'VE EATEN.
I'LL PULL 'EM OUT OF YOU ONE BY ONE!
SPLUK
SHREEEE!
FILTHY THING. YOUR SOUL IS GRAY AND COMPROMISED. A GUTTER SCRAP, NOT FIT FOR CONSUMPTION.
BUT I'LL HAVE IT ANYWAY.
AAAGGGHH!

NO!
SHKK
RRAAIEE!
SPIKE--?
STILL HERE, THANKS TO YOU...
FOR THE MOMENT.
YOUR MOMENT IS OVER. YOU ARE OVER.
YOU SHOULD'VE RUN.
NOT A CHANCE. WHATEVER HAPPENS...IT HAPPENS TO US BOTH.

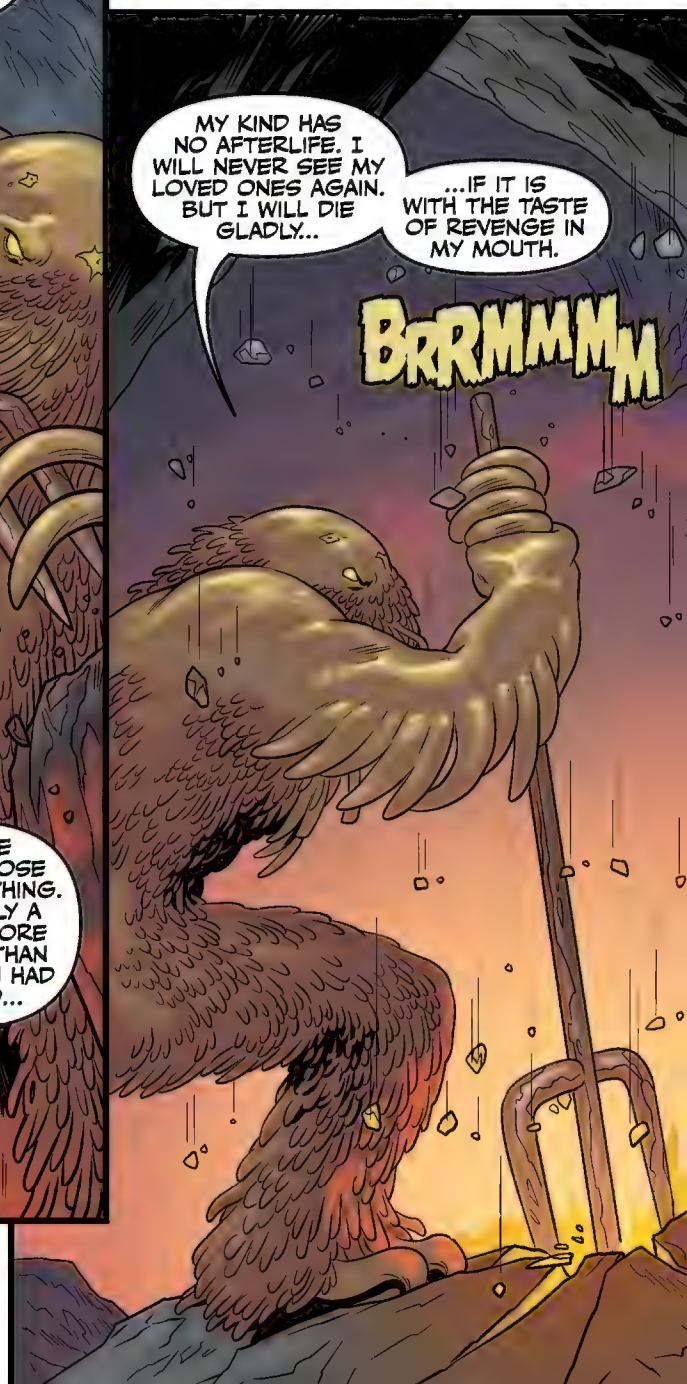
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE ALONE!
YOU BROUGHT BUFFY BACK, AND IT WAS ROUGH FOR A WHILE, BUT NOW IT'S OKAY AND YOU'RE ALL TOGETHER AND EVERYONE'S HAPPY!
ANGEL KILLED GILES, BUT THEN HE BROUGHT HIM BACK, AND EVERYBODY'S THRILLED ABOUT THAT!
AND XANDER-- XANDER BETRAYED US ALL! BUT HE MEANT WELL, AND IT ALL WORKED OUT OKAY, SO HE'S FORGIVEN! HE'S ONE OF THE FAMILY AGAIN!
BUT I CAN TELL. YOU DON'T TRUST ME. I'M THERE, BUT ALWAYS APART.
AND I DESERVE IT... BECAUSE I WAS PART OF *THIS*.
ANDREW... IF THAT'S HOW WE'VE MADE YOU FEEL, I'M SORRY.
BUT YOU CAN'T FIX IT LIKE THIS.
NOT BY DOING THIS TO TARA.
NOT BY DOING THIS TO ME.
PLEASE...

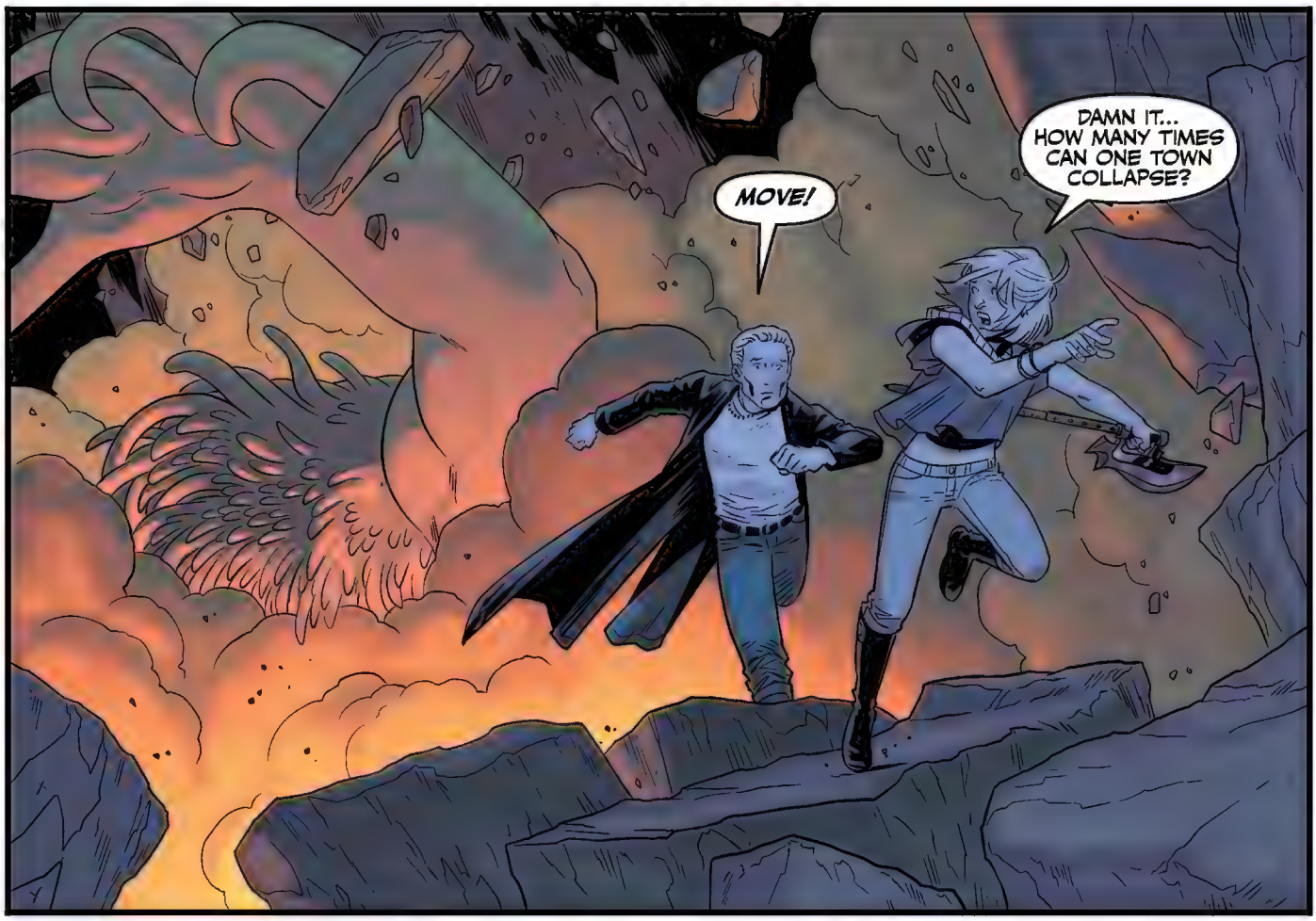
SIRI, TERMINATE SPELL.
YES, YOUR GRACE.
I'M SO SORRY...
IT'S OKAY, ANDREW.
IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY.

HANG ON. IS THIS PILE OF MUCUS SMALLER?
YEAH. AND KINDA PEAKED LOOKING.

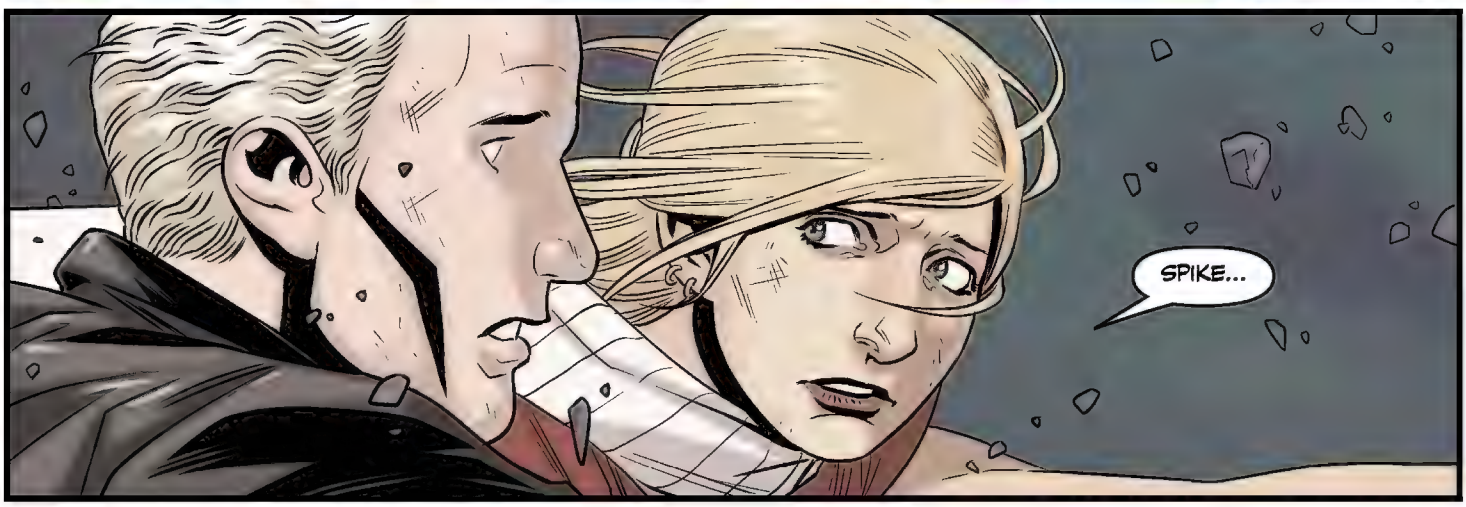
I'M GONNA TAKE THAT AS A GOOD SIGN.
WHHSTHNK
HRRAA!

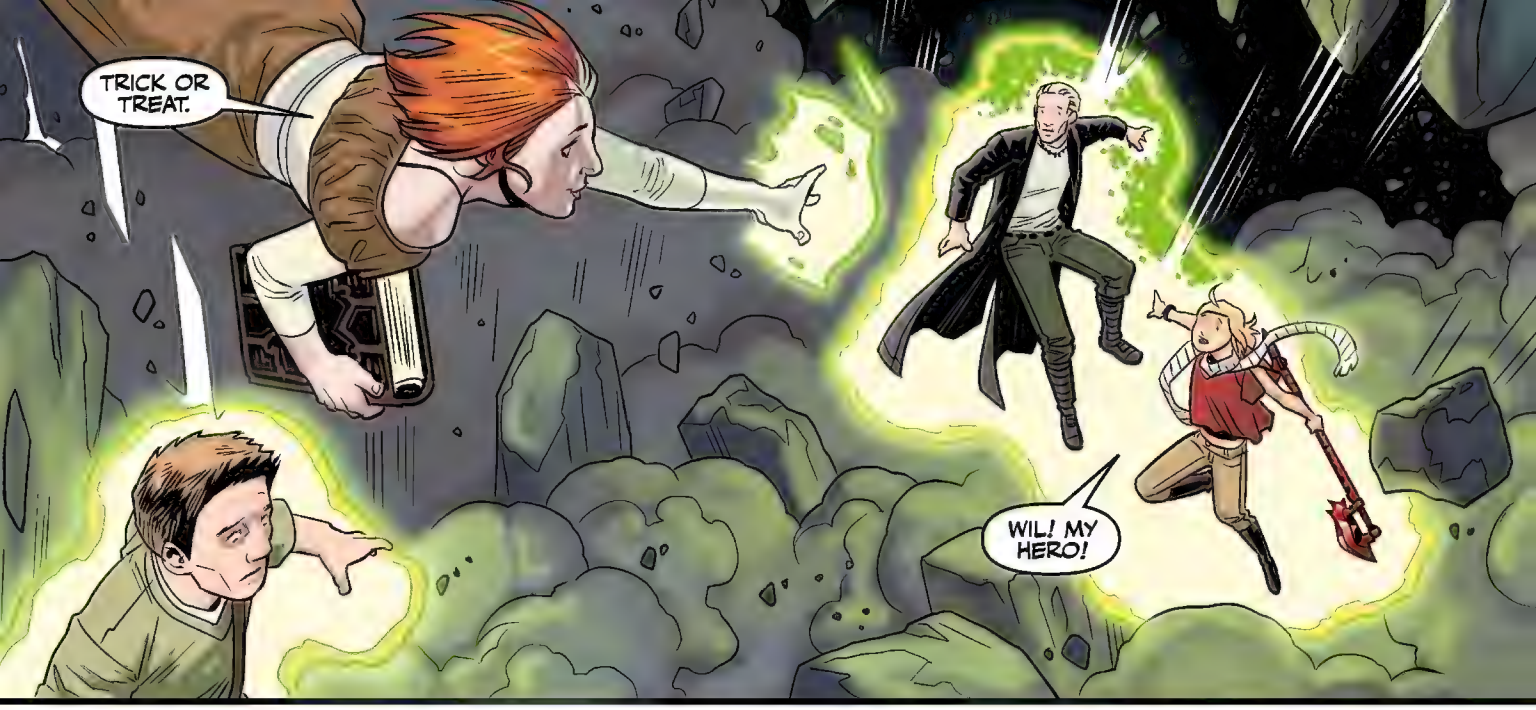
NO! I WAS SO CLOSE!
YOU'RE STILL CLOSE TO SOMETHING. PROBABLY A LITTLE MORE CHOPPY THAN WHAT YOU HAD IN MIND...


MY KIND HAS NO AFTERLIFE. I WILL NEVER SEE MY LOVED ONES AGAIN. BUT I WILL DIE GLADLY...
...IF IT IS WITH THE TASTE OF REVENGE IN MY MOUTH.
BRRMMMM

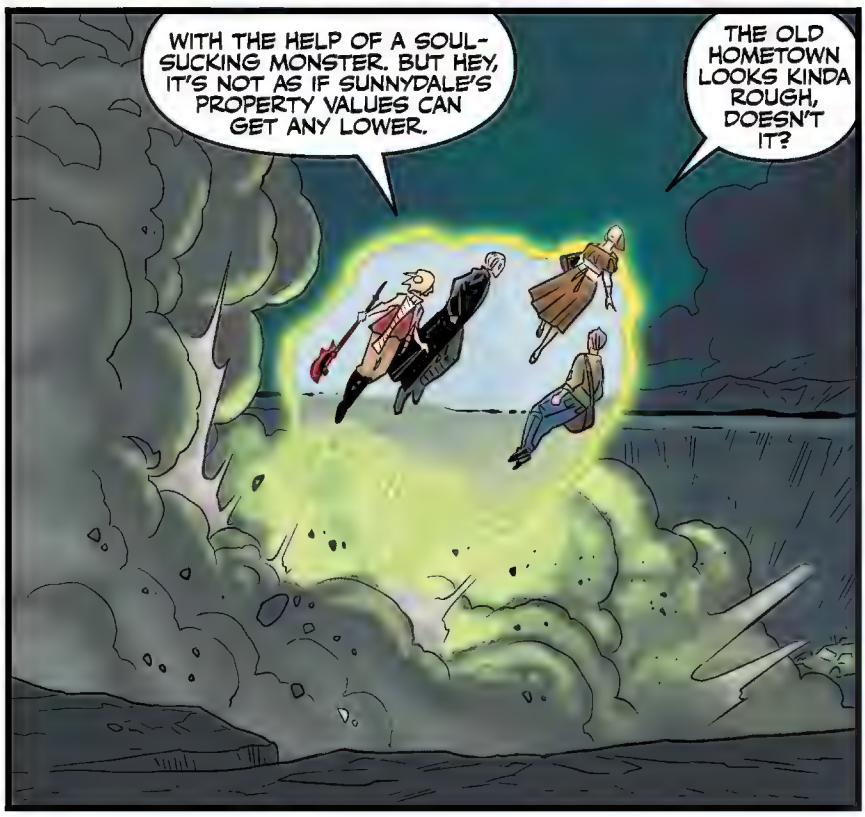

DAMN IT... HOW MANY TIMES CAN ONE TOWN COLLAPSE?
MOVE!

WE'RE NOT GONNA MAKE IT.
GOTTA TRY.


SPIKE...

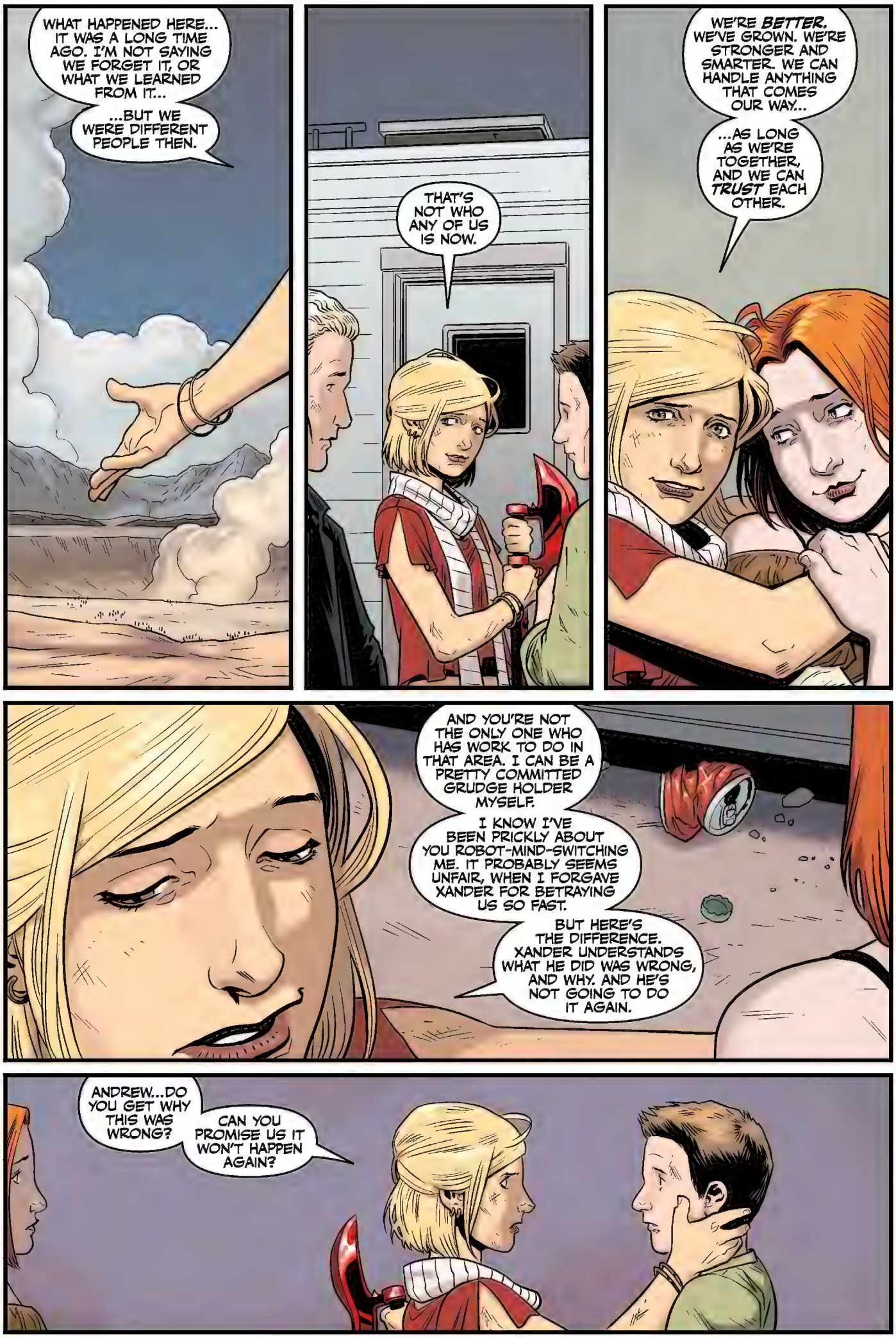

TRICK OR TREAT.
WIL! MY HERO!

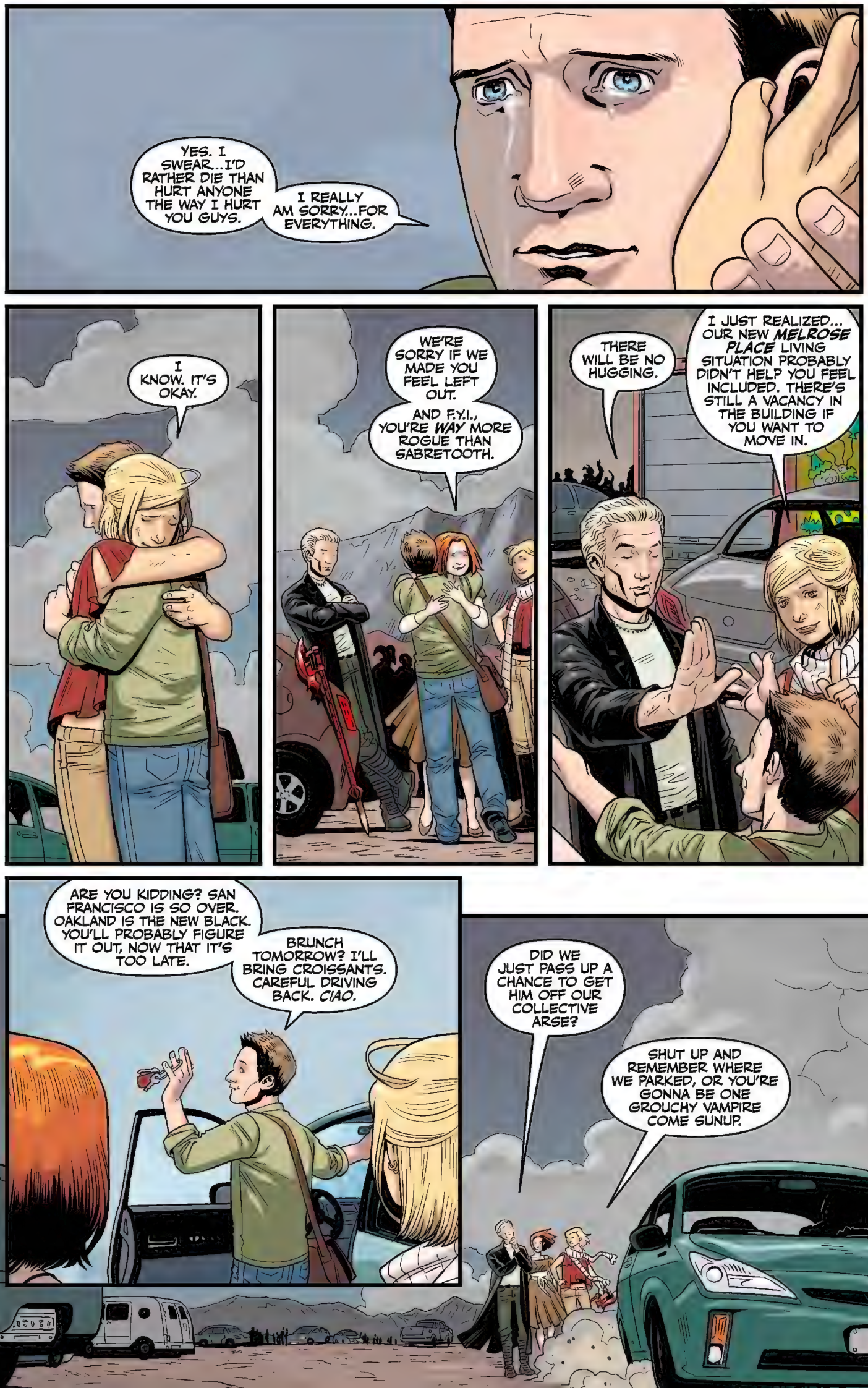
BRILLIANT. I SEE YOU'VE GOT OUR LOST LAMB, AS WELL.
YEAH, AH, SORRY ABOUT... WOW. DID I DO THAT?

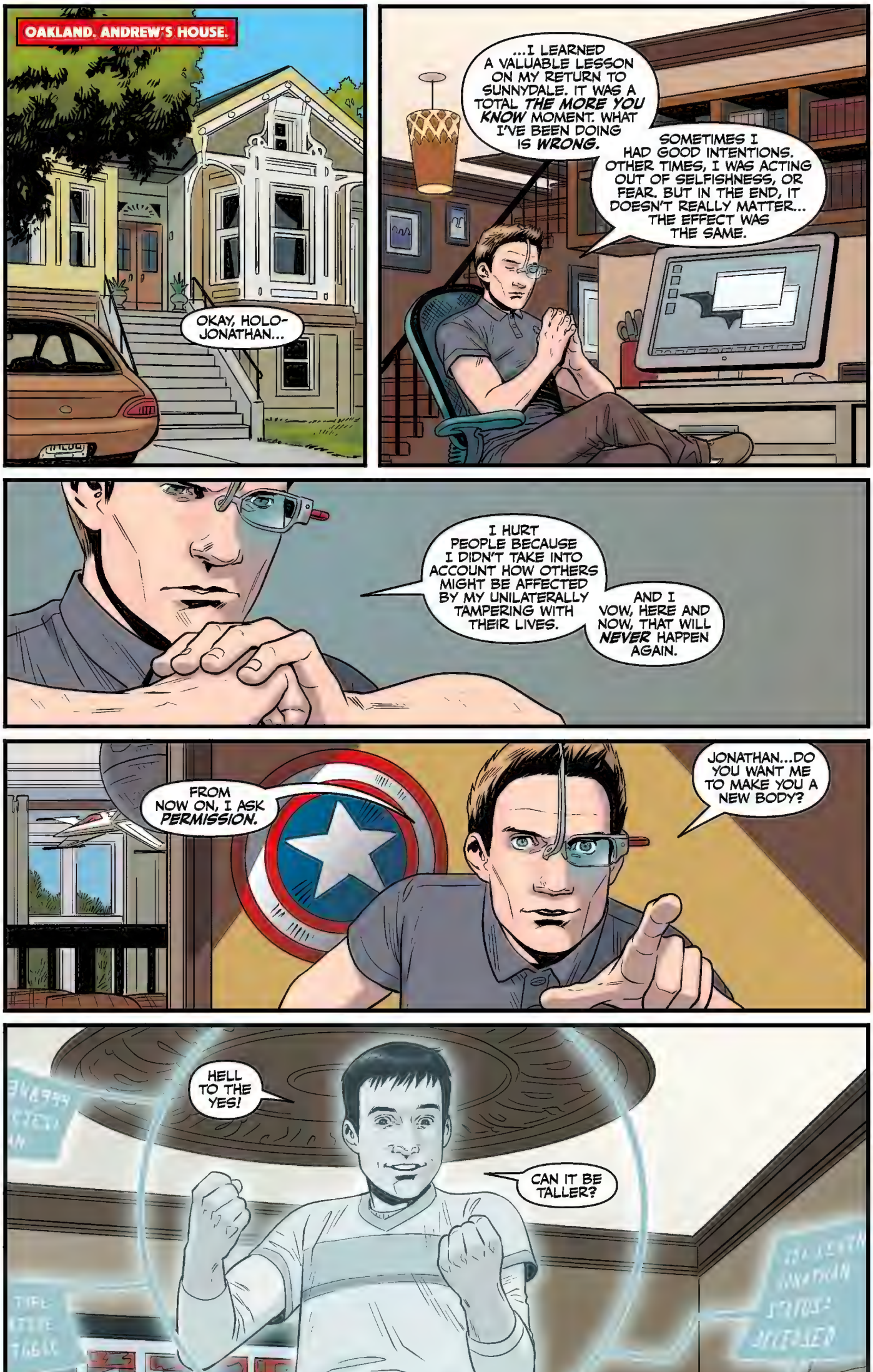

WITH THE HELP OF A SOUL-SUCKING MONSTER. BUT HEY, IT'S NOT AS IF SUNNYDALE'S PROPERTY VALUES CAN GET ANY LOWER.
THE OLD HOMETOWN LOOKS KINDA ROUGH, DOESN'T IT?

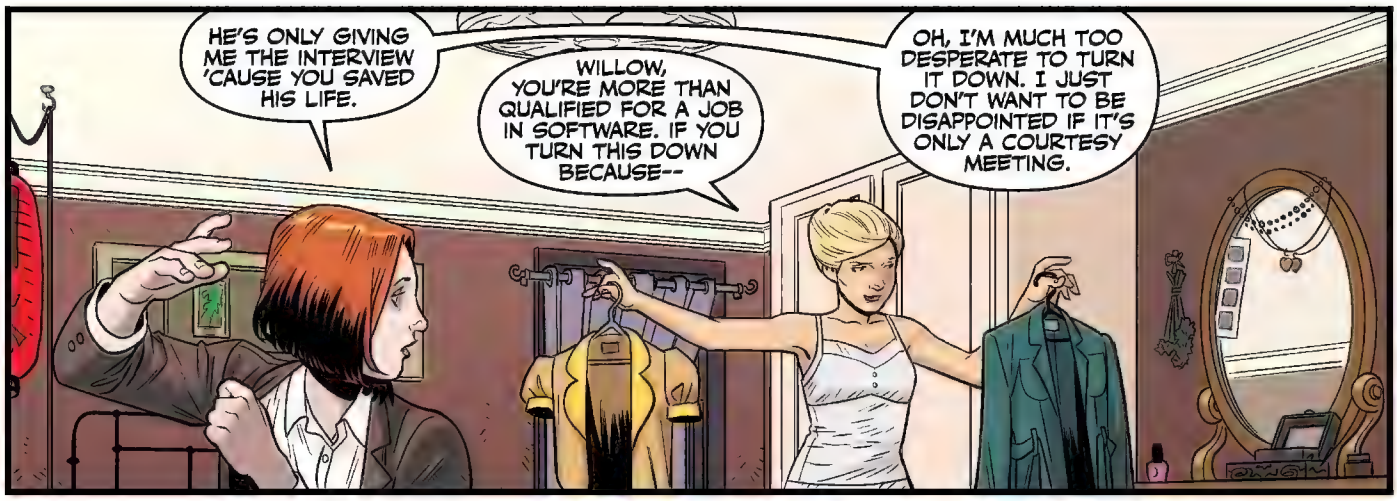
THIS? IT'S ONLY A PLACE. HOME'S WHERE MY PEEPS ARE.
EVERYTHING ELSE IS JUST THE VIEW.

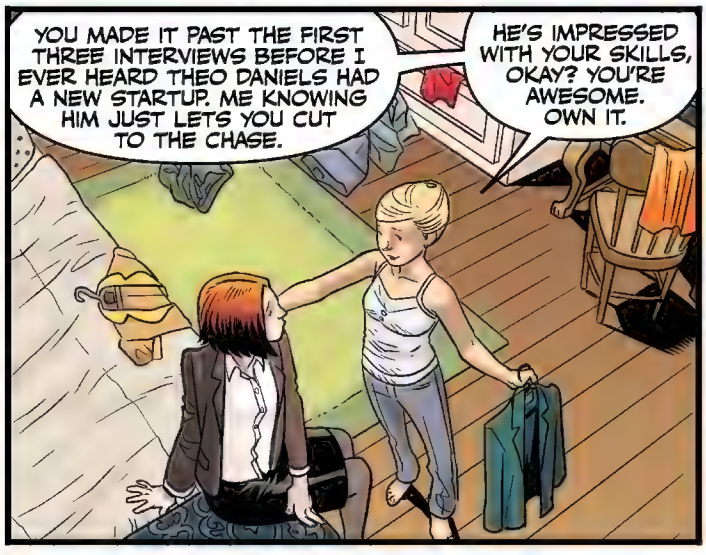
WHY'S EVERYONE LEAVING SO EARLY? I'M FROM L.A. THAT WAS BARELY AN AFTERSHOCK.
OR A PRESHOCK. THAT HOLE WIDENS, I'M GONNA BE FAR AWAY.
YEAH, SCREW THIS. I HEARD THERE'S A HELLMOUTH IN CLEVELAND. I'M TOTALLY GOING THERE NEXT YEAR. AT LEAST THEY HAVE TOILETS.
ICE MATE
WELL, THIS IS ME. SORRY AGAIN FOR... YOU KNOW.
ANDREW, HOLD ON.
I KNOW. I'M OUT OF THE BAND. I'M COUSIN OLIVER ON *THE BRADY BUNCH*. IT'S TIME TO ADMIT ADDING ME WAS A HORRIBLE MISTAKE AND MAKE A CLEAN BREAK OF IT.
IF YOU'RE TRYING TO CONVINCE US, YOU'RE DOING A LOVELY JOB.
ANDREW, STOP. PLEASE.
OKAY. YES. WHAT YOU DID WAS STUPID. AND DANGEROUS. AGAIN.
MAYBE WE HAVE GIVEN YOU REASON TO THINK WE DON'T ACCEPT YOU. BUT YOU'VE GIVEN US PLENTY OF REASON NOT TO.
WORST FACE TURN EVER, RIGHT? I THOUGHT I COULD BE ROGUE AND I ENDED UP SABRETOOTH.
NO! WE'RE OVER THE SUPERVILLAIN THING. IT'S IN THE PAST. THAT'S WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY.
BUT *WE* CAN'T LEAVE IT THERE UNTIL *YOU* DO.

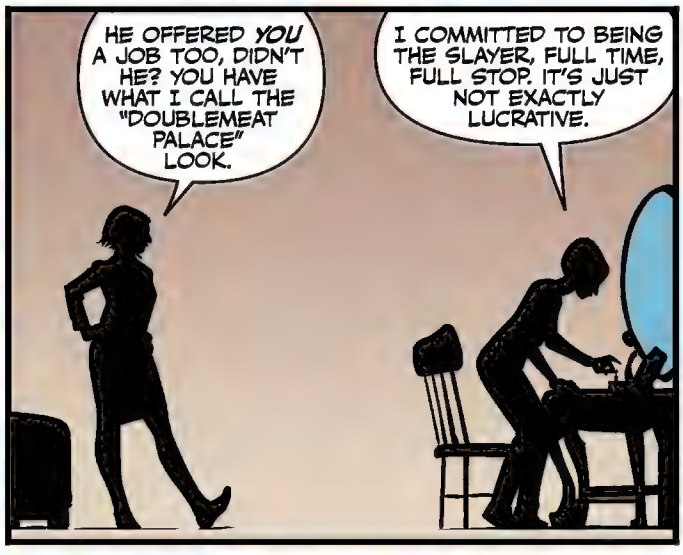

WHAT HAPPENED HERE... IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. I'M NOT SAYING WE FORGET IT, OR WHAT WE LEARNED FROM IT...
...BUT WE WERE DIFFERENT PEOPLE THEN.
THAT'S NOT WHO ANY OF US IS NOW.
WE'RE BETTER. WE'VE GROWN. WE'RE STRONGER AND SMARTER. WE CAN HANDLE ANYTHING THAT COMES OUR WAY...
...AS LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER, AND WE CAN TRUST EACH OTHER.
AND YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS WORK TO DO IN THAT AREA. I CAN BE A PRETTY COMMITTED GRUDGE HOLDER MYSELF.
I KNOW I'VE BEEN PRICKLY ABOUT YOU ROBOT-MIND-SWITCHING ME. IT PROBABLY SEEMS UNFAIR, WHEN I FORGAVE XANDER FOR BETRAYING US SO FAST.
BUT HERE'S THE DIFFERENCE. XANDER UNDERSTANDS WHAT HE DID WAS WRONG, AND WHY. AND HE'S NOT GOING TO DO IT AGAIN.
ANDREW...DO YOU GET WHY THIS WAS WRONG?
CAN YOU PROMISE US IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN?

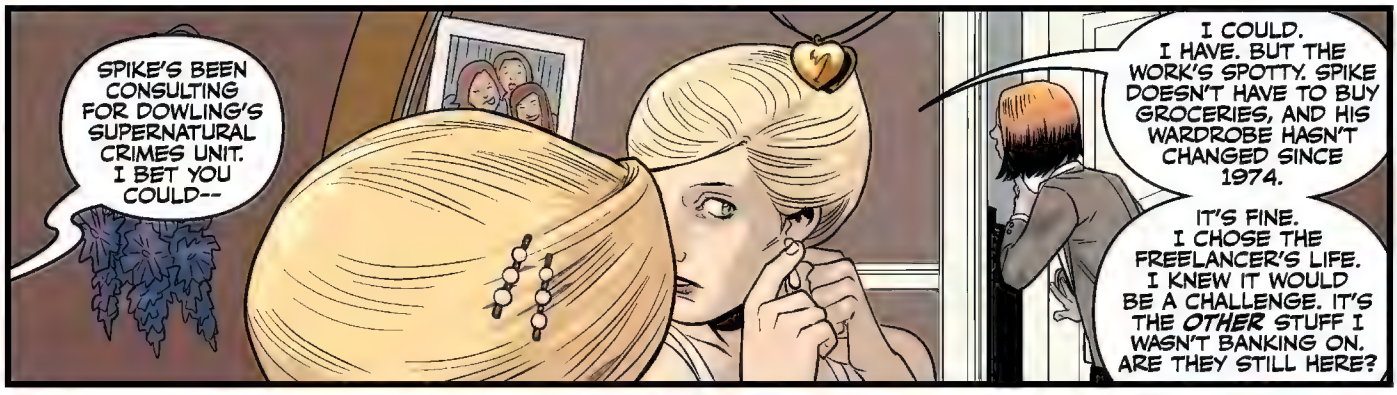

YES. I SWEAR...I'D RATHER DIE THAN HURT ANYONE THE WAY I HURT YOU GUYS.
I REALLY AM SORRY...FOR EVERYTHING.
I KNOW. IT'S OKAY.
WE'RE SORRY IF WE MADE YOU FEEL LEFT OUT.
AND F.Y.I., YOU'RE *WAY* MORE ROGUE THAN SABRETOOTH.
THERE WILL BE NO HUGGING.
I JUST REALIZED... OUR NEW ***MELROSE PLACE*** LIVING SITUATION PROBABLY DIDN'T HELP YOU FEEL INCLUDED. THERE'S STILL A VACANCY IN THE BUILDING IF YOU WANT TO MOVE IN.
ARE YOU KIDDING? SAN FRANCISCO IS SO OVER. OAKLAND IS THE NEW BLACK. YOU'LL PROBABLY FIGURE IT OUT, NOW THAT IT'S TOO LATE.
BRUNCH TOMORROW? I'LL BRING CROISSANTS. CAREFUL DRIVING BACK. *CIAO.*
DID WE JUST PASS UP A CHANCE TO GET HIM OFF OUR COLLECTIVE ARSE?
SHUT UP AND REMEMBER WHERE WE PARKED, OR YOU'RE GONNA BE ONE GROUCHY VAMPIRE COME SUNUP.


OAKLAND. ANDREW'S HOUSE.
OKAY, HOLO-JONATHAN...
...I LEARNED A VALUABLE LESSON ON MY RETURN TO SUNNYDALE. IT WAS A TOTAL *THE MORE YOU KNOW* MOMENT. WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING IS *WRONG.*
SOMETIMES I HAD GOOD INTENTIONS. OTHER TIMES, I WAS ACTING OUT OF SELFISHNESS, OR FEAR. BUT IN THE END, IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER... THE EFFECT WAS THE SAME.
I HURT PEOPLE BECAUSE I DIDN'T TAKE INTO ACCOUNT HOW OTHERS MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY MY UNILATERALLY TAMPERING WITH THEIR LIVES.
AND I VOW, HERE AND NOW, THAT WILL *NEVER* HAPPEN AGAIN.
FROM NOW ON, I ASK *PERMISSION.*
JONATHAN...DO YOU WANT ME TO MAKE YOU A NEW BODY?
HELL TO THE YES!
CAN IT BE TALLER?


HE'S ONLY GIVING ME THE INTERVIEW 'CAUSE YOU SAVED HIS LIFE.
WILLOW, YOU'RE MORE THAN QUALIFIED FOR A JOB IN SOFTWARE. IF YOU TURN THIS DOWN BECAUSE--
OH, I'M MUCH TOO DESPERATE TO TURN IT DOWN. I JUST DON'T WANT TO BE DISAPPOINTED IF IT'S ONLY A COURTESY MEETING.

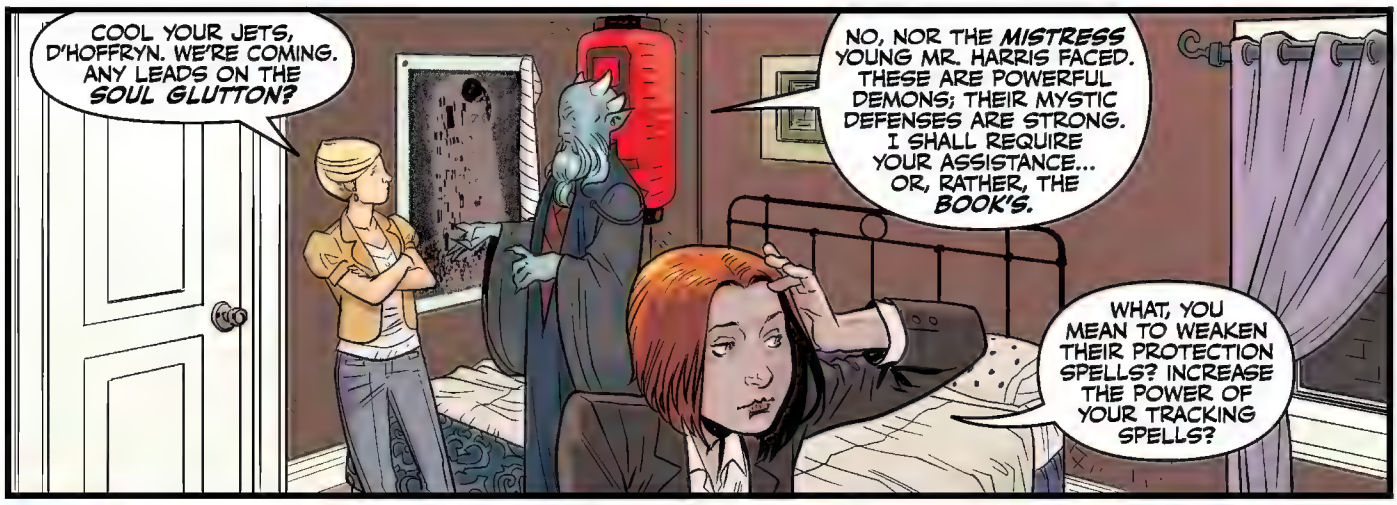

YOU MADE IT PAST THE FIRST THREE INTERVIEWS BEFORE I EVER HEARD THEO DANIELS HAD A NEW STARTUP. ME KNOWING HIM JUST LETS YOU CUT TO THE CHASE.
HE'S IMPRESSED WITH YOUR SKILLS, OKAY? YOU'RE AWESOME. OWN IT.


HE OFFERED *YOU* A JOB TOO, DIDN'T HE? YOU HAVE WHAT I CALL THE "DOUBLEMEAT PALACE" LOOK.
I COMMITTED TO BEING THE SLAYER, FULL TIME, FULL STOP. IT'S JUST NOT EXACTLY LUCRATIVE.

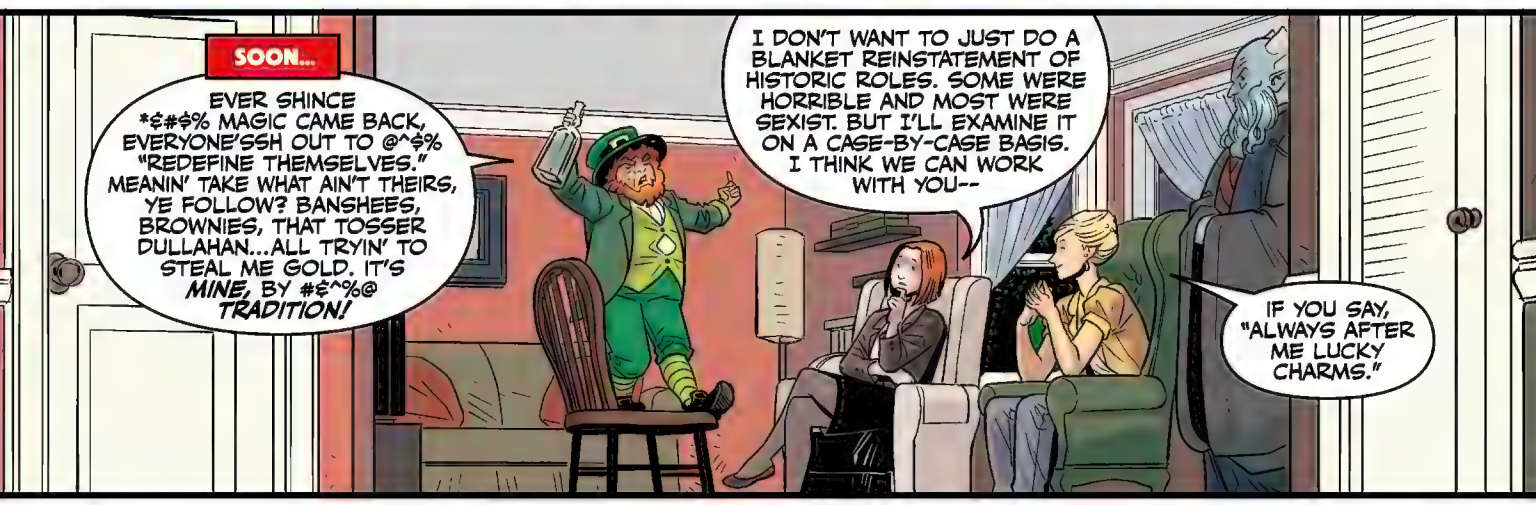

SPIKE'S BEEN CONSULTING FOR DOWLING'S SUPERNATURAL CRIMES UNIT. I BET YOU COULD--
I COULD. I HAVE. BUT THE WORK'S SPOTTY. SPIKE DOESN'T HAVE TO BUY GROCERIES, AND HIS WARDROBE HASN'T CHANGED SINCE 1974.
IT'S FINE. I CHOSE THE FREELANCER'S LIFE. I KNEW IT WOULD BE A CHALLENGE. IT'S THE *OTHER* STUFF I WASN'T BANKING ON. ARE THEY STILL HERE?

LET ME CHECK...
DAY OFF
(OR HARMONY IN MY HEAD)

THE LEPRECHAUN'S DRUNK. AT EIGHT A.M. HE'S ANNOYED THE LUCKY CAT INTO A MURDEROUS RAGE. DAWN'S RUNNING OUT OF POTS AND PANS TO PUT UNDER CEDRIC THE SLIME MAN.
WE SHOULD REALLY GO OUT THERE. UGH. MONSTERS, OKAY, BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO DEAL WITH LOBBYISTS. DOES THIS ANNOY YOU AS MUCH AS IT DOES ME?
CAN I BE HONEST? IT TERRIFIES ME. WE'RE OVERSEEING THE WRITING OF THE NEW RULES OF MAGIC. ARBITRATING CONFLICTING AGENDAS. MAKING DECISIONS THAT COULD STAND FOR EONS.
IF I MESS THIS UP, I RUINED MAGIC.
WHICH YOU SPENT THE PAST YEAR GIVING ME CRAP FOR DOING. THANKS, THAT DELICIOUS MORSEL OF IRONY MAKES ME FEEL BETTER.
GLAD TO HELP. ALSO, I HATE YOU.
WIL, NO ONE IS MORE QUALIFIED THAN YOU TO DO THIS. BETWEEN YOU AND GILES, YOU KNOW ALL THE RULES OF OLD MAGIC...WHAT WORKED AND WHAT DIDN'T.
BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOU'RE A GOOD PERSON. AND SMART. AND THERE'S NO ONE I WOULD RATHER TRUST THIS TO THAN YOU...BUT HEY, GUESS WHAT? YOU'RE NOT DOING IT ALONE.
INDEED YOU ARE NOT. YOU HAVE MY ADVICE, AND THAT OF THE ENTIRE MYSTIC COUNCIL.
HOWEVER, IF YOU DO NOT SEE YOUR SUPPLICANTS SOON, I SHALL BE FORCED TO RESORT TO ARBITRATION BY MEANS OF YOUR "MAGIC EIGHT BALL," WHICH, ODDLY, SEEMS TO HAVE NO MAGIC IN IT WHATSOEVER.

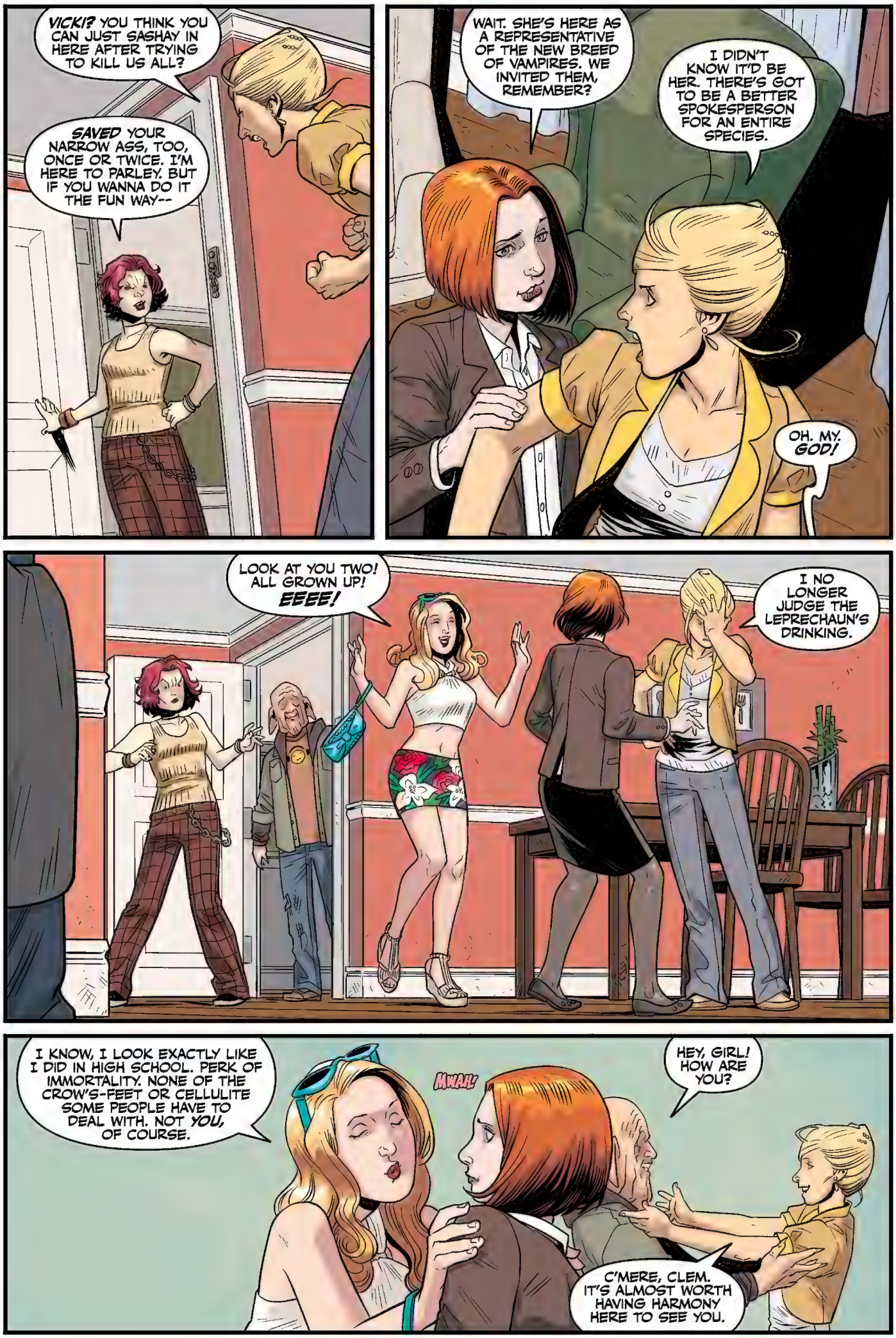

COOL YOUR JETS, D'HOFFRYN. WE'RE COMING. ANY LEADS ON THE SOUL GLUTTON?
NO, NOR THE MISTRESS YOUNG MR. HARRIS FACED. THESE ARE POWERFUL DEMONS; THEIR MYSTIC DEFENSES ARE STRONG. I SHALL REQUIRE YOUR ASSISTANCE... OR, RATHER, THE BOOK'S.
WHAT, YOU MEAN TO WEAKEN THEIR PROTECTION SPELLS? INCREASE THE POWER OF YOUR TRACKING SPELLS?

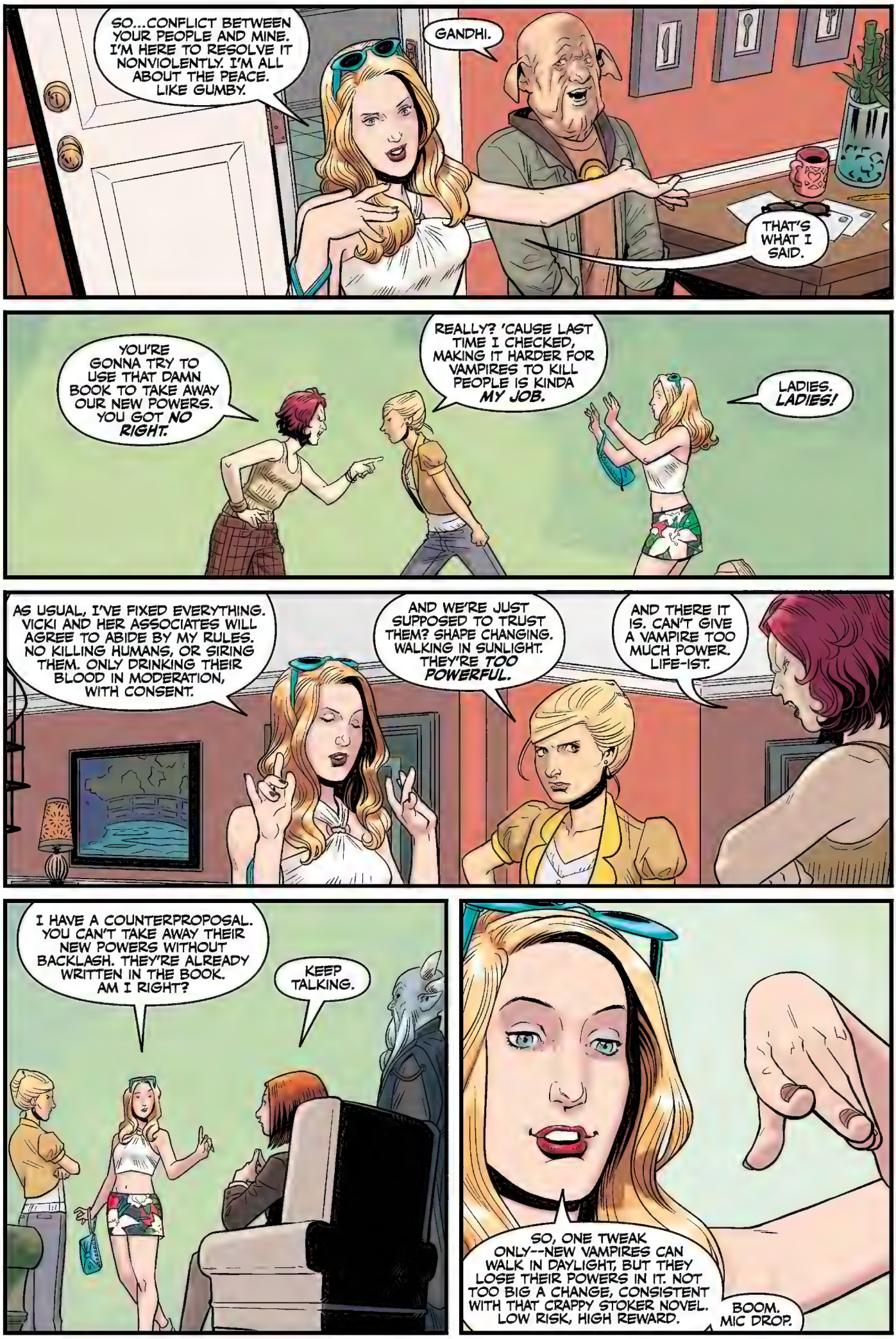
NATURE WOULD LIKELY COMPENSATE TO RESTORE THE BALANCE. WE MUST BE CREATIVE...PERHAPS FORMALIZING THE OVERSIGHT POWERS OF THE HEAD OF THE COUNCIL. ENABLE WHOEVER HOLDS THAT OFFICE TO OVERCOME CERTAIN PROTECTIONS.
LET'S SAVE IT FOR LATER. I GOT A FEELING I'M GONNA HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF PROPOSED RULE CHANGES IN ABOUT THREE...TWO...ONE...


SOON...
EVER SHINCE *€#$% MAGIC CAME BACK, EVERYONE'SSH OUT TO @^$% "REDEFINE THEMSELVES." MEANIN' TAKE WHAT AIN'T THEIRS, YE FOLLOW? BANSHEES, BROWNIES, THAT TOSSER DULLAHAN...ALL TRYIN' TO STEAL ME GOLD. IT'S MINE, BY #€^%@ TRADITION!
I DON'T WANT TO JUST DO A BLANKET REINSTATEMENT OF HISTORIC ROLES. SOME WERE HORRIBLE AND MOST WERE SEXIST. BUT I'LL EXAMINE IT ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. I THINK WE CAN WORK WITH YOU--
IF YOU SAY, "ALWAYS AFTER ME LUCKY CHARMS."

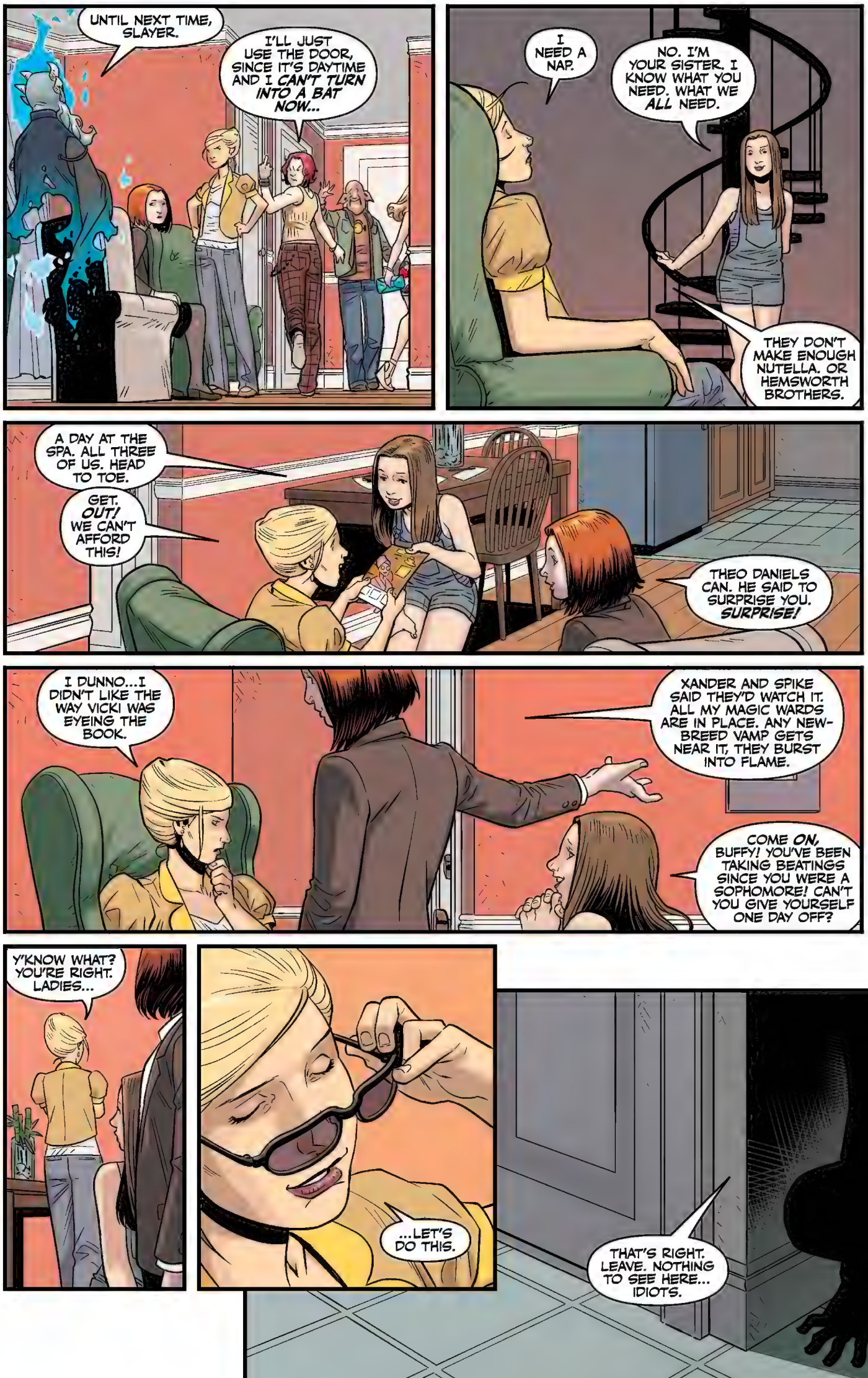
HURTFUL, IS WHAT IT IS. I AM MORE THAN A CATCH PHRASE!
WE DONE?
THERE IS ONE MORE.

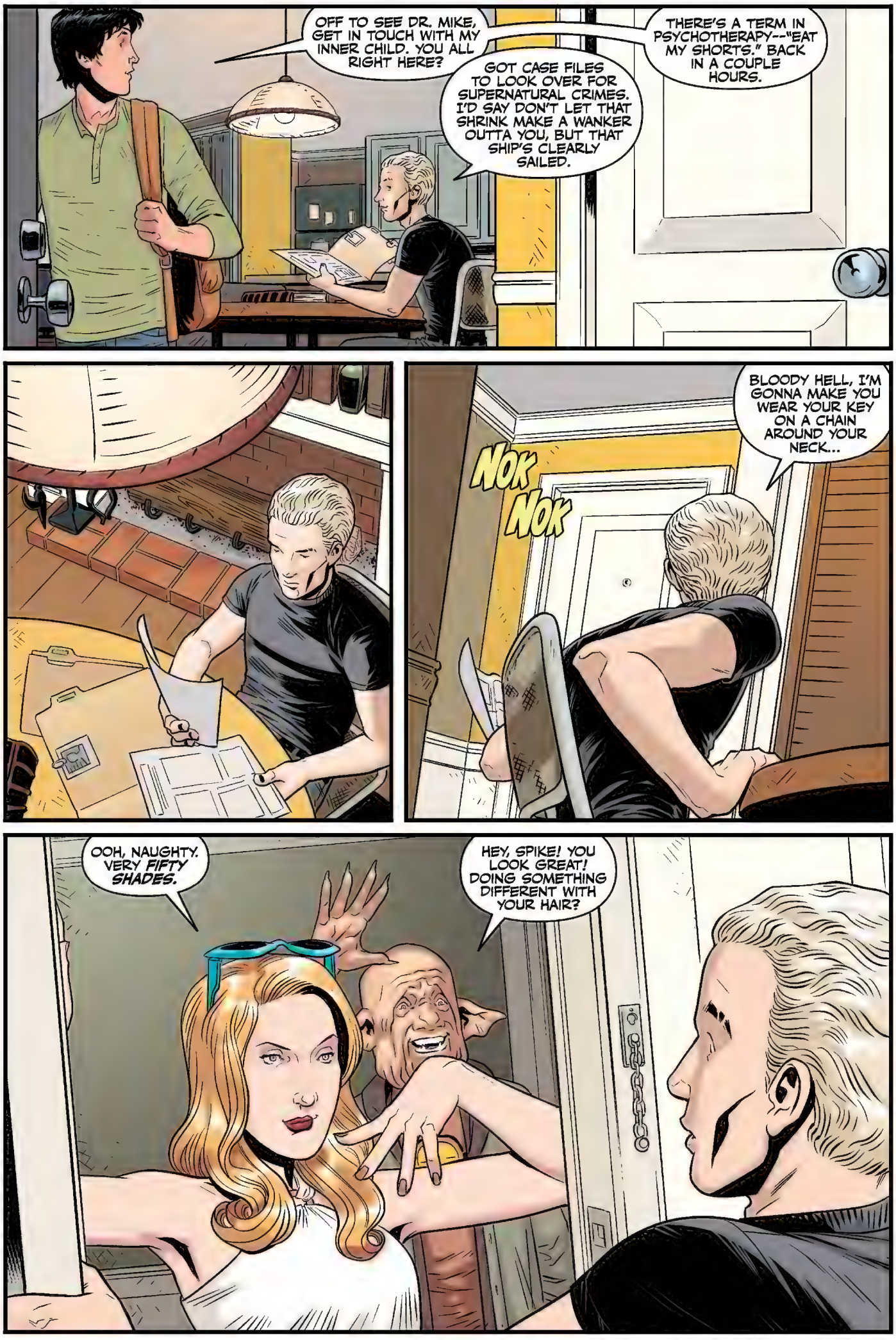
YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME.

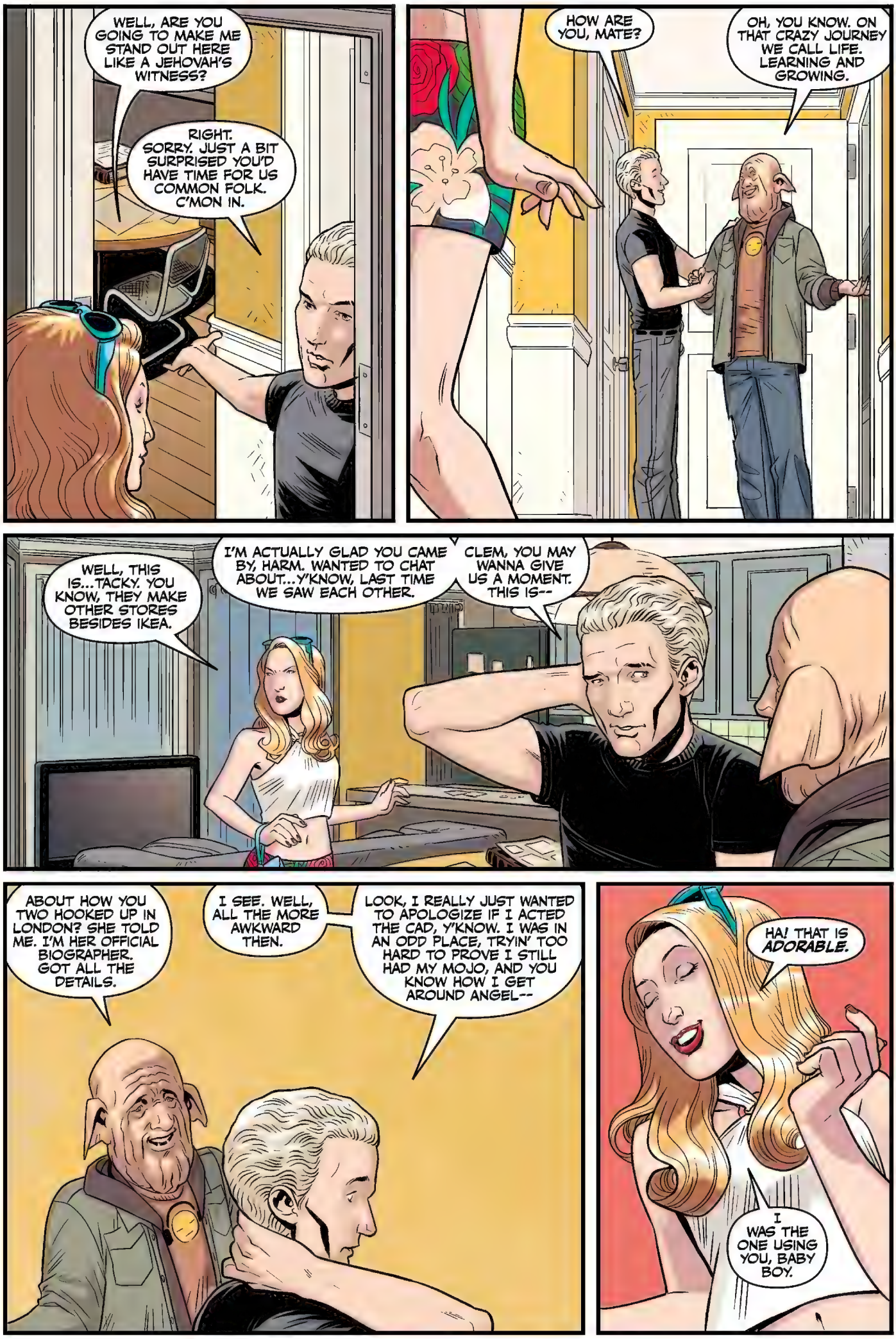

VICKI? YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST SASHAY IN HERE AFTER TRYING TO KILL US ALL?
SAVED YOUR NARROW ASS, TOO, ONCE OR TWICE. I'M HERE TO PARLEY. BUT IF YOU WANNA DO IT THE FUN WAY--
WAIT. SHE'S HERE AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NEW BREED OF VAMPIRES. WE INVITED THEM, REMEMBER?
I DIDN'T KNOW IT'D BE HER. THERE'S GOT TO BE A BETTER SPOKESPERSON FOR AN ENTIRE SPECIES.
OH. MY. GOD!
LOOK AT YOU TWO! ALL GROWN UP! EEEE!
I NO LONGER JUDGE THE LEPRECHAUN'S DRINKING.
I KNOW, I LOOK EXACTLY LIKE I DID IN HIGH SCHOOL. PERK OF IMMORTALITY. NONE OF THE CROW'S-FEET OR CELLULITE SOME PEOPLE HAVE TO DEAL WITH. NOT YOU, OF COURSE.
MWAH!
HEY, GIRL! HOW ARE YOU?
C'MERE, CLEM. IT'S ALMOST WORTH HAVING HARMONY HERE TO SEE YOU.

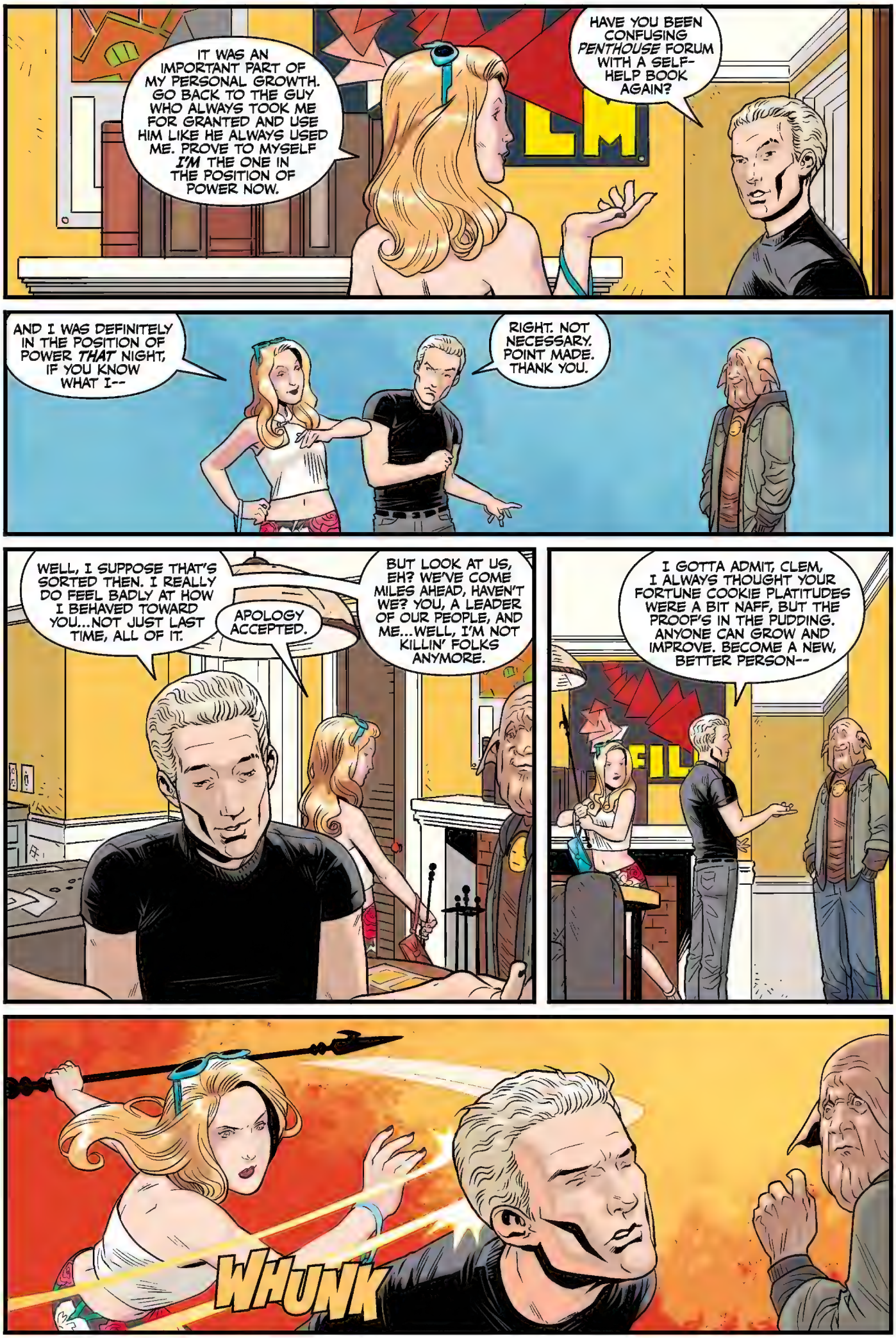

SO...CONFLICT BETWEEN YOUR PEOPLE AND MINE. I'M HERE TO RESOLVE IT NONVIOLENTLY. I'M ALL ABOUT THE PEACE. LIKE GUMBY.
GANDHI.
THAT'S WHAT I SAID.
YOU'RE GONNA TRY TO USE THAT DAMN BOOK TO TAKE AWAY OUR NEW POWERS. YOU GOT *NO RIGHT.*
REALLY? 'CAUSE LAST TIME I CHECKED, MAKING IT HARDER FOR VAMPIRES TO KILL PEOPLE IS KINDA *MY JOB.*
LADIES. *LADIES!*
AS USUAL, I'VE FIXED EVERYTHING. VICKI AND HER ASSOCIATES WILL AGREE TO ABIDE BY MY RULES. NO KILLING HUMANS, OR SIRING THEM. ONLY DRINKING THEIR BLOOD IN MODERATION, WITH CONSENT.
AND WE'RE JUST SUPPOSED TO TRUST THEM? SHAPE CHANGING. WALKING IN SUNLIGHT. THEY'RE *TOO POWERFUL.*
AND THERE IT IS. CAN'T GIVE A VAMPIRE TOO MUCH POWER. LIFE-IST.
I HAVE A COUNTERPROPOSAL. YOU CAN'T TAKE AWAY THEIR NEW POWERS WITHOUT BACKLASH. THEY'RE ALREADY WRITTEN IN THE BOOK. AM I RIGHT?
KEEP TALKING.
SO, ONE TWEAK ONLY--NEW VAMPIRES CAN WALK IN DAYLIGHT, BUT THEY LOSE THEIR POWERS IN IT. NOT TOO BIG A CHANGE, CONSISTENT WITH THAT CRAPPY STOKER NOVEL. LOW RISK, HIGH REWARD.
BOOM. MIC DROP.

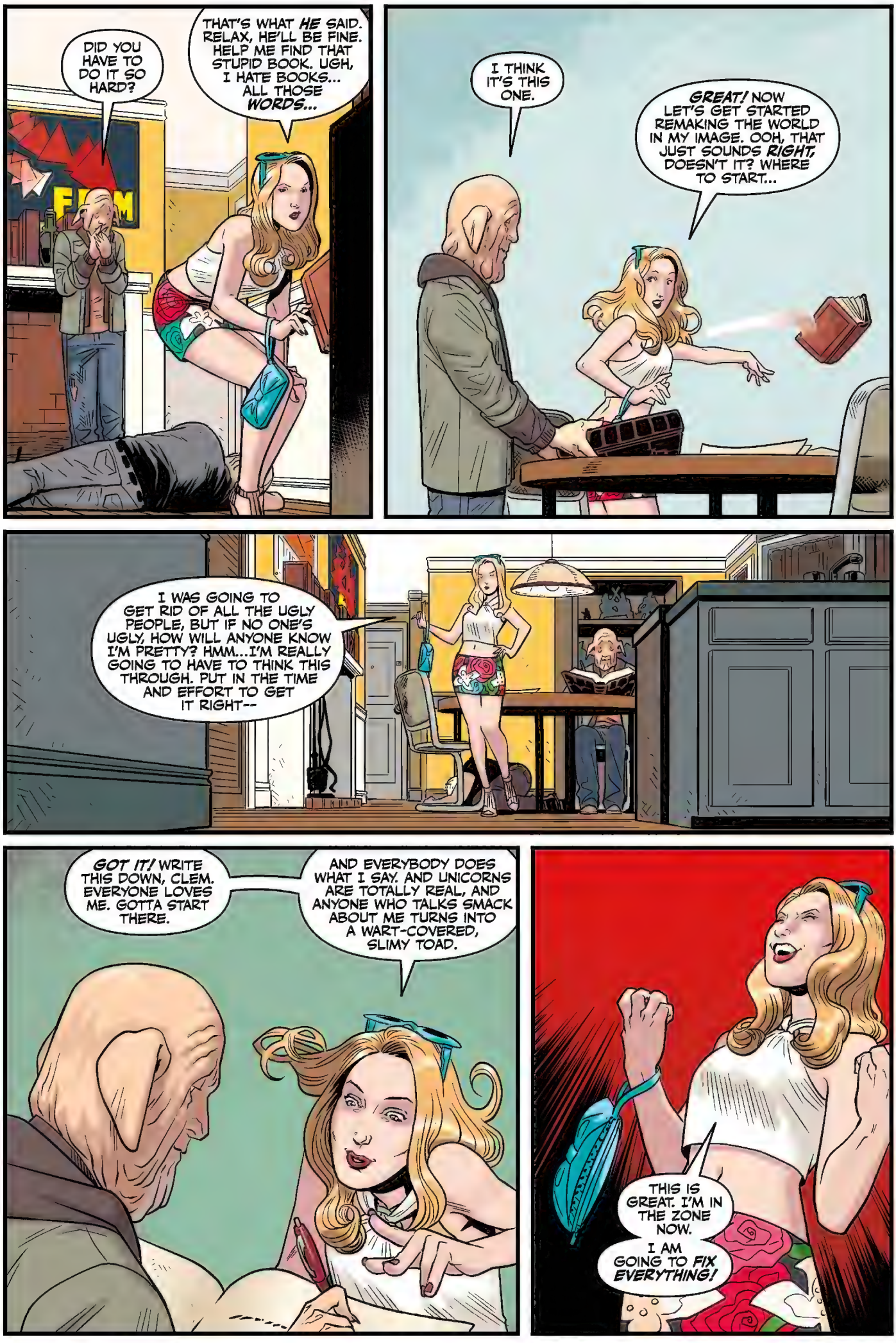
YOU'VE GOTTA BE FREAKIN' KIDDING ME!
NOT NEARLY FAR ENOUGH.
A COMPROMISE NO ONE IS FULLY HAPPY WITH. THE ESSENCE OF POLITICS. THE QUESTION IS, CAN BOTH SIDES LIVE WITH IT?
I GOTTA SAY...I DON'T LOVE IT, BUT IT MAKES THE MOST SENSE OF ANYTHING I'VE HEARD.
FINE.
YAY ME!
YOU WERE AMAZING.
CAN EVERYONE GET OUT OF MY HOUSE, PLEASE?

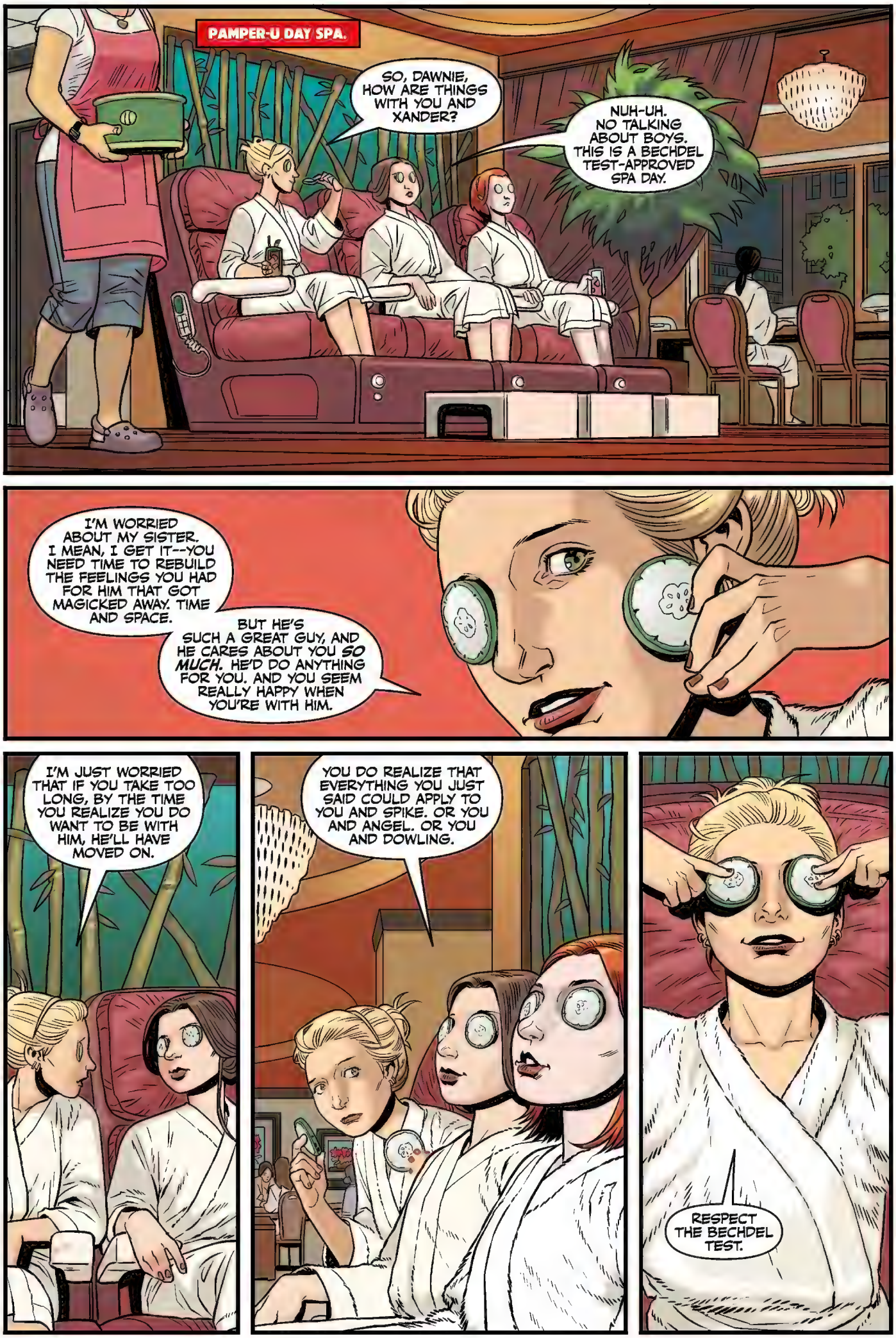

UNTIL NEXT TIME, SLAYER.
I'LL JUST USE THE DOOR, SINCE IT'S DAYTIME AND I CAN'T TURN INTO A BAT NOW...
I NEED A NAP.
NO. I'M YOUR SISTER. I KNOW WHAT YOU NEED. WHAT WE ALL NEED.
THEY DON'T MAKE ENOUGH NUTELLA. OR HEMSWORTH BROTHERS.
A DAY AT THE SPA. ALL THREE OF US. HEAD TO TOE.
GET. OUT! WE CAN'T AFFORD THIS!
THEO DANIELS CAN. HE SAID TO SURPRISE YOU. SURPRISE!
I DUNNO...I DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY VICKI WAS EYEING THE BOOK.
XANDER AND SPIKE SAID THEY'D WATCH IT. ALL MY MAGIC WARDS ARE IN PLACE. ANY NEW-BREED VAMP GETS NEAR IT, THEY BURST INTO FLAME.
COME ON, BUFFY! YOU'VE BEEN TAKING BEATINGS SINCE YOU WERE A SOPHOMORE! CAN'T YOU GIVE YOURSELF ONE DAY OFF?
Y'KNOW WHAT? YOU'RE RIGHT. LADIES...
...LET'S DO THIS.
THAT'S RIGHT. LEAVE. NOTHING TO SEE HERE... IDIOTS.


OFF TO SEE DR. MIKE, GET IN TOUCH WITH MY INNER CHILD. YOU ALL RIGHT HERE?
GOT CASE FILES TO LOOK OVER FOR SUPERNATURAL CRIMES. I'D SAY DON'T LET THAT SHRINK MAKE A WANKER OUTTA YOU, BUT THAT SHIP'S CLEARLY SAILED.
THERE'S A TERM IN PSYCHOTHERAPY--"EAT MY SHORTS." BACK IN A COUPLE HOURS.
NOK NOK
BLOODY HELL, I'M GONNA MAKE YOU WEAR YOUR KEY ON A CHAIN AROUND YOUR NECK...
OOH, NAUGHTY. VERY *FIFTY SHADES.*
HEY, SPIKE! YOU LOOK GREAT! DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT WITH YOUR HAIR?

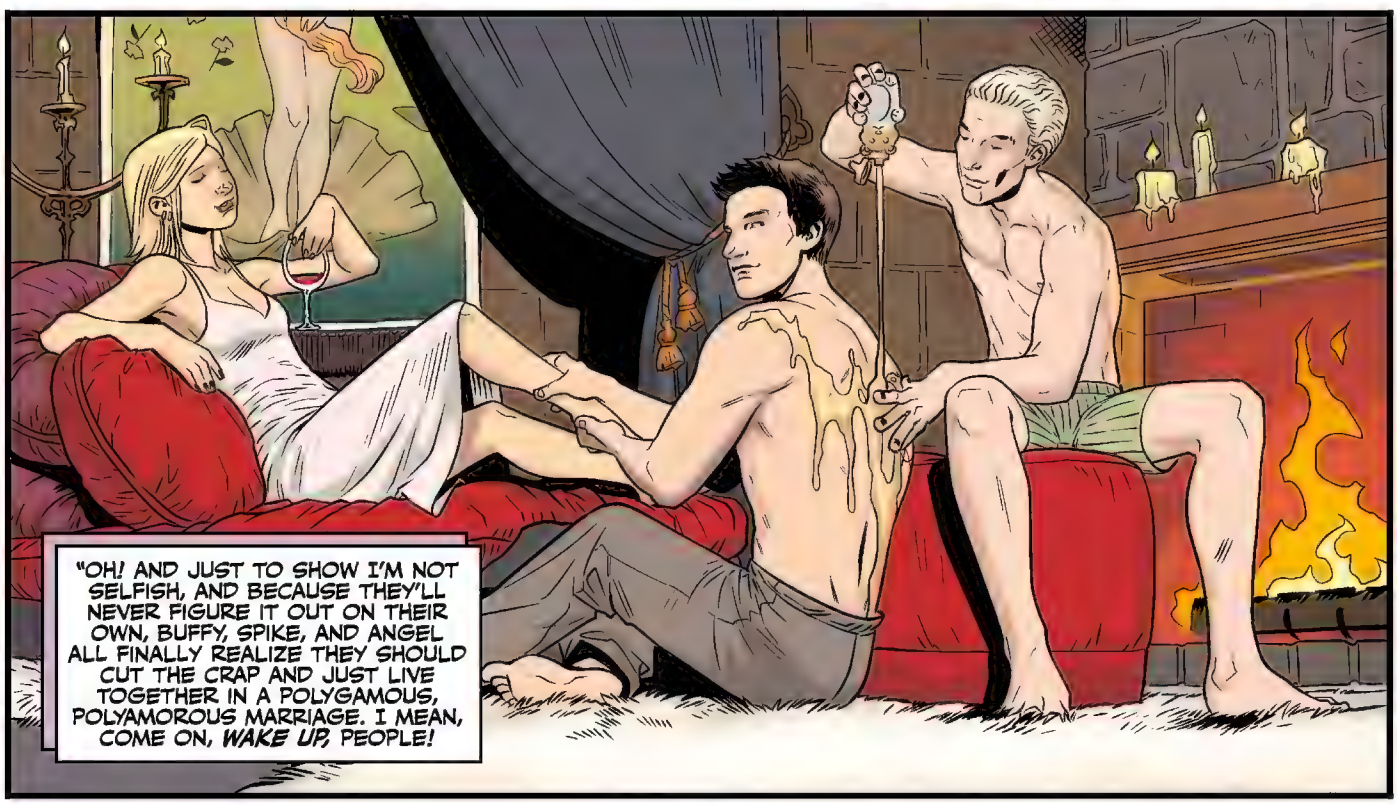

WELL, ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME STAND OUT HERE LIKE A JEHOVAH'S WITNESS?
RIGHT. SORRY. JUST A BIT SURPRISED YOU'D HAVE TIME FOR US COMMON FOLK. C'MON IN.
HOW ARE YOU, MATE?
OH, YOU KNOW. ON THAT CRAZY JOURNEY WE CALL LIFE. LEARNING AND GROWING.
WELL, THIS IS...TACKY. YOU KNOW, THEY MAKE OTHER STORES BESIDES IKEA.
I'M ACTUALLY GLAD YOU CAME BY, HARM. WANTED TO CHAT ABOUT...Y'KNOW, LAST TIME WE SAW EACH OTHER.
CLEM, YOU MAY WANNA GIVE US A MOMENT. THIS IS--
ABOUT HOW YOU TWO HOOKED UP IN LONDON? SHE TOLD ME. I'M HER OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHER. GOT ALL THE DETAILS.
I SEE. WELL, ALL THE MORE AWKWARD THEN.
LOOK, I REALLY JUST WANTED TO APOLOGIZE IF I ACTED THE CAD, Y'KNOW. I WAS IN AN ODD PLACE, TRYIN' TOO HARD TO PROVE I STILL HAD MY MOJO, AND YOU KNOW HOW I GET AROUND ANGEL--
HA! THAT IS ADORABLE.
I WAS THE ONE USING YOU, BABY BOY.

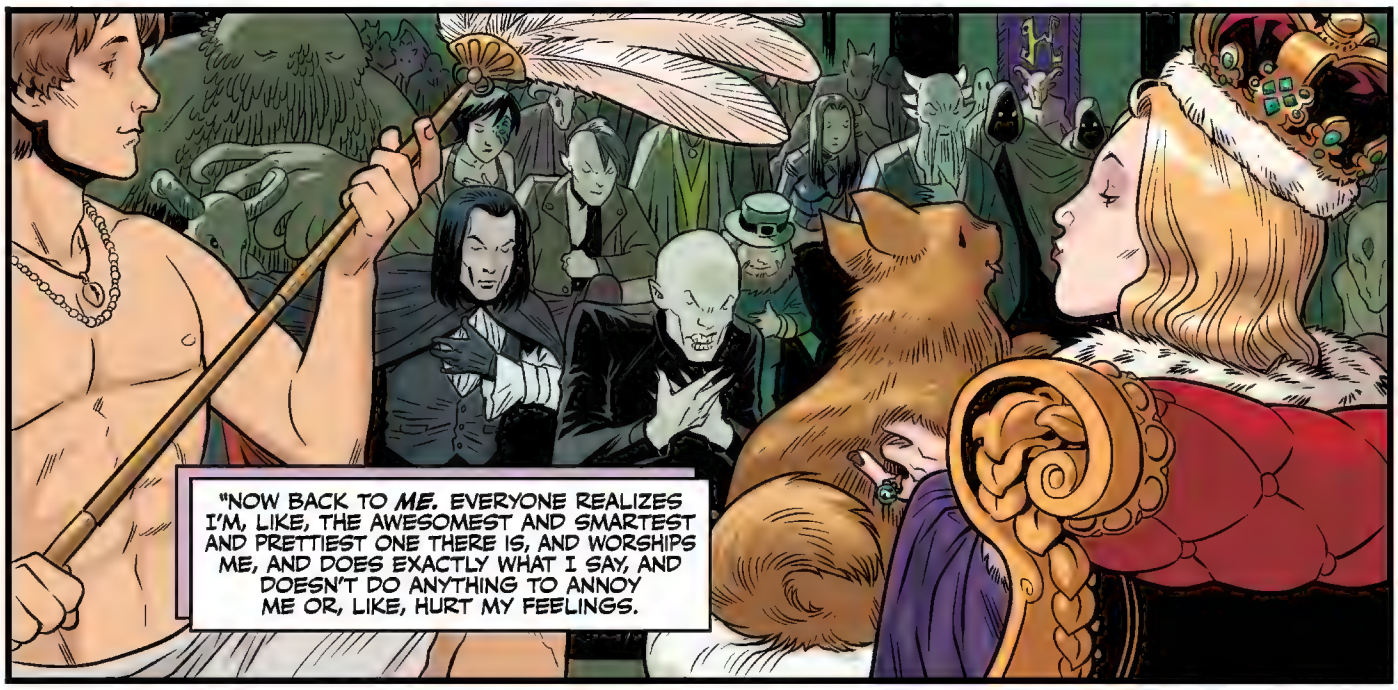

IT WAS AN IMPORTANT PART OF MY PERSONAL GROWTH. GO BACK TO THE GUY WHO ALWAYS TOOK ME FOR GRANTED AND USE HIM LIKE HE ALWAYS USED ME. PROVE TO MYSELF *I'M* THE ONE IN THE POSITION OF POWER NOW.
HAVE YOU BEEN CONFUSING *PENTHOUSE* FORUM WITH A SELF-HELP BOOK AGAIN?
AND I WAS DEFINITELY IN THE POSITION OF POWER *THAT* NIGHT, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I--
RIGHT. NOT NECESSARY. POINT MADE. THANK YOU.
WELL, I SUPPOSE THAT'S SORTED THEN. I REALLY DO FEEL BADLY AT HOW I BEHAVED TOWARD YOU...NOT JUST LAST TIME, ALL OF IT.
APOLOGY ACCEPTED.
BUT LOOK AT US, EH? WE'VE COME MILES AHEAD, HAVEN'T WE? YOU, A LEADER OF OUR PEOPLE, AND ME...WELL, I'M NOT KILLIN' FOLKS ANYMORE.
I GOTTA ADMIT, CLEM, I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOUR FORTUNE COOKIE PLATITUDES WERE A BIT NAFF, BUT THE PROOF'S IN THE PUDDING. ANYONE CAN GROW AND IMPROVE. BECOME A NEW, BETTER PERSON--
WHUNK

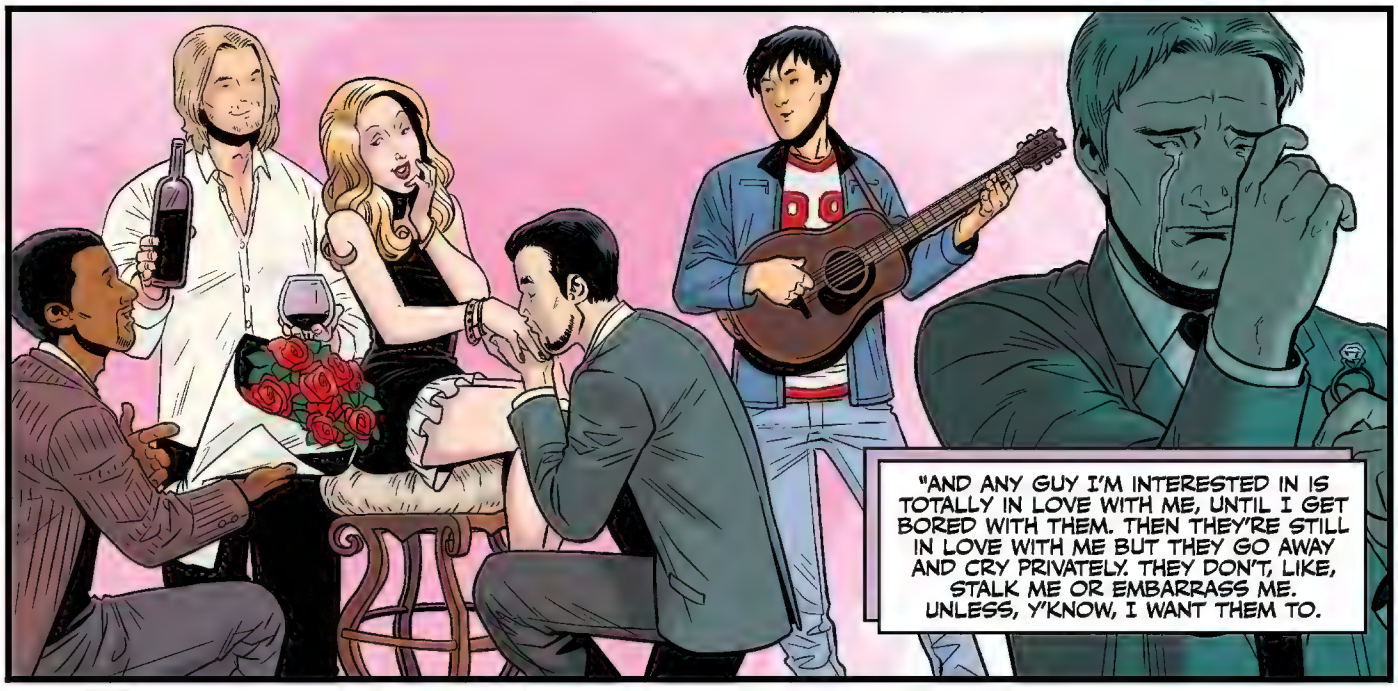

DID YOU HAVE TO DO IT SO HARD?
THAT'S WHAT HE SAID. RELAX, HE'LL BE FINE. HELP ME FIND THAT STUPID BOOK. UGH, I HATE BOOKS... ALL THOSE WORDS...
I THINK IT'S THIS ONE.
GREAT! NOW LET'S GET STARTED REMAKING THE WORLD IN MY IMAGE. OOH, THAT JUST SOUNDS RIGHT, DOESN'T IT? WHERE TO START...
I WAS GOING TO GET RID OF ALL THE UGLY PEOPLE, BUT IF NO ONE'S UGLY, HOW WILL ANYONE KNOW I'M PRETTY? HMM...I'M REALLY GOING TO HAVE TO THINK THIS THROUGH. PUT IN THE TIME AND EFFORT TO GET IT RIGHT--
GOT IT! WRITE THIS DOWN, CLEM. EVERYONE LOVES ME. GOTTA START THERE.
AND EVERYBODY DOES WHAT I SAY. AND UNICORNS ARE TOTALLY REAL, AND ANYONE WHO TALKS SMACK ABOUT ME TURNS INTO A WART-COVERED, SLIMY TOAD.
THIS IS GREAT. I'M IN THE ZONE NOW.
I AM GOING TO FIX EVERYTHING!

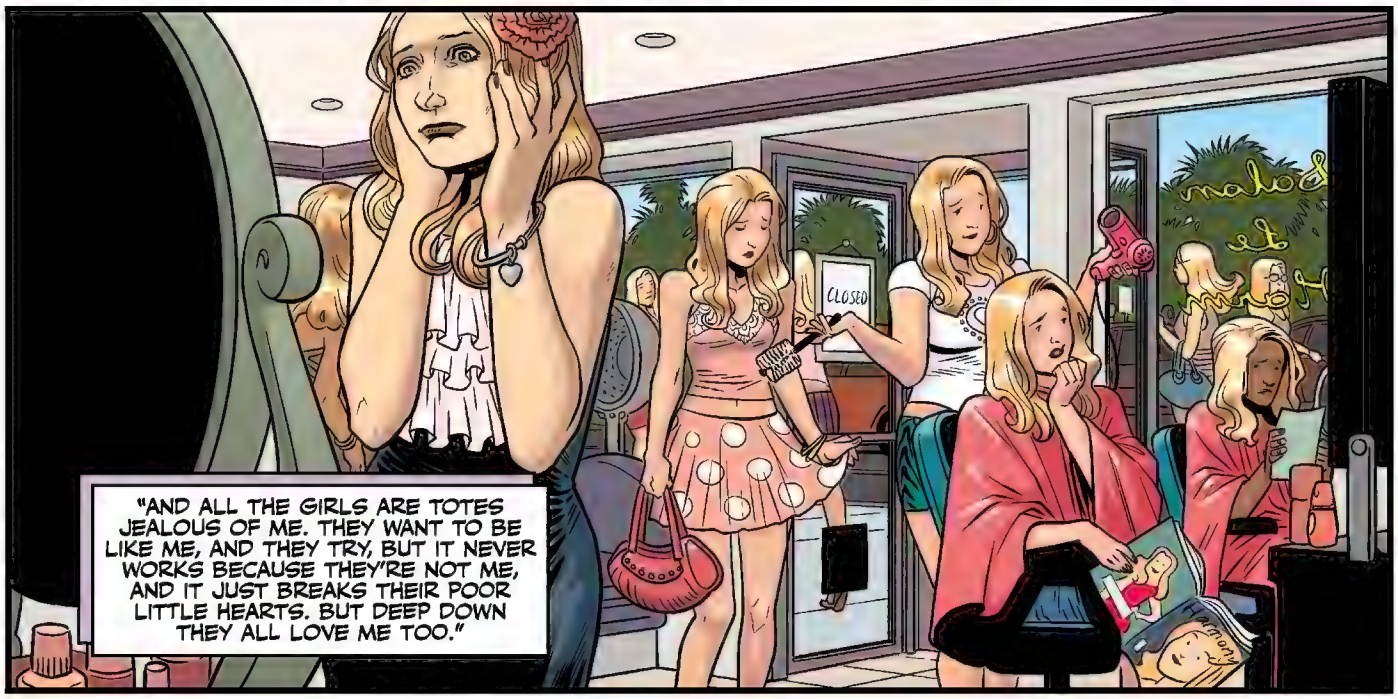

PAMPER-U DAY SPA.
SO, DAWNIE, HOW ARE THINGS WITH YOU AND XANDER?
NUH-UH. NO TALKING ABOUT BOYS. THIS IS A BECHDEL TEST-APPROVED SPA DAY.
I'M WORRIED ABOUT MY SISTER. I MEAN, I GET IT--YOU NEED TIME TO REBUILD THE FEELINGS YOU HAD FOR HIM THAT GOT MAGICKED AWAY. TIME AND SPACE.
BUT HE'S SUCH A GREAT GUY, AND HE CARES ABOUT YOU *SO MUCH.* HE'D DO ANYTHING FOR YOU. AND YOU SEEM REALLY HAPPY WHEN YOU'RE WITH HIM.
I'M JUST WORRIED THAT IF YOU TAKE TOO LONG, BY THE TIME YOU REALIZE YOU DO WANT TO BE WITH HIM, HE'LL HAVE MOVED ON.
YOU DO REALIZE THAT EVERYTHING YOU JUST SAID COULD APPLY TO YOU AND SPIKE. OR YOU AND ANGEL. OR YOU AND DOWLING.
RESPECT THE BECHDEL TEST.

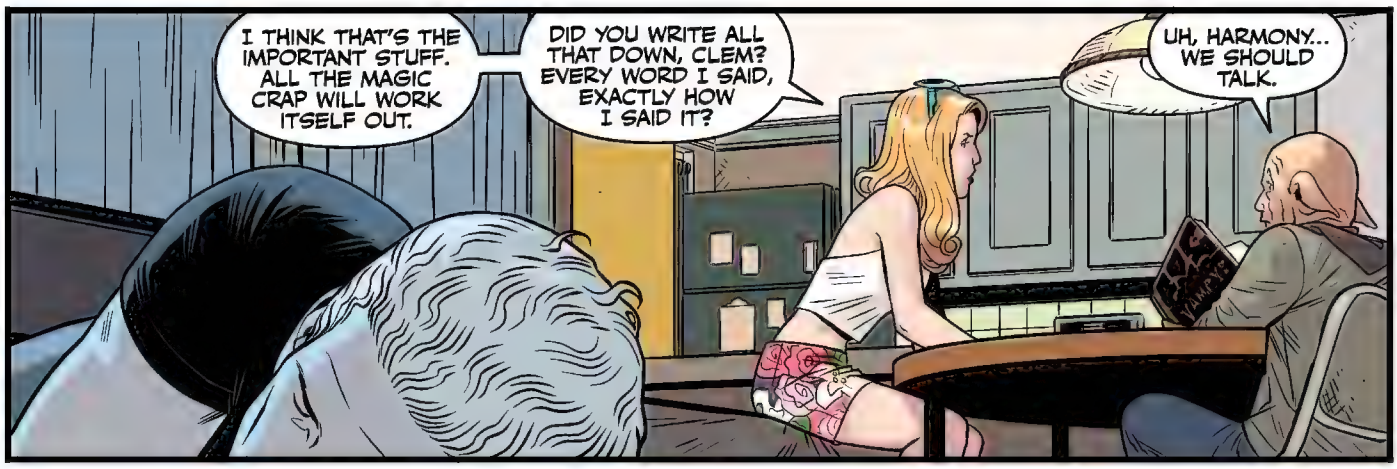
OKAY. I'M WARMED UP NOW. HERE COMES HARMONY'S NEW WORLD ORDER. BRACE YOURSELF FOR THE AWESOME.
"SO, LIKE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, HUMAN BEINGS *LOVE* HAVING VAMPIRES SUCK THEIR BLOOD. IT'S, LIKE, SUPER FUN FOR THEM. AND VAMPIRES TRY THEIR BEST TO NOT SUCK OUT SO MUCH THEY KILL ANYBODY, BUT IF THEY DO, LIKE, ON ACCIDENT, NOBODY FREAKS OUT.

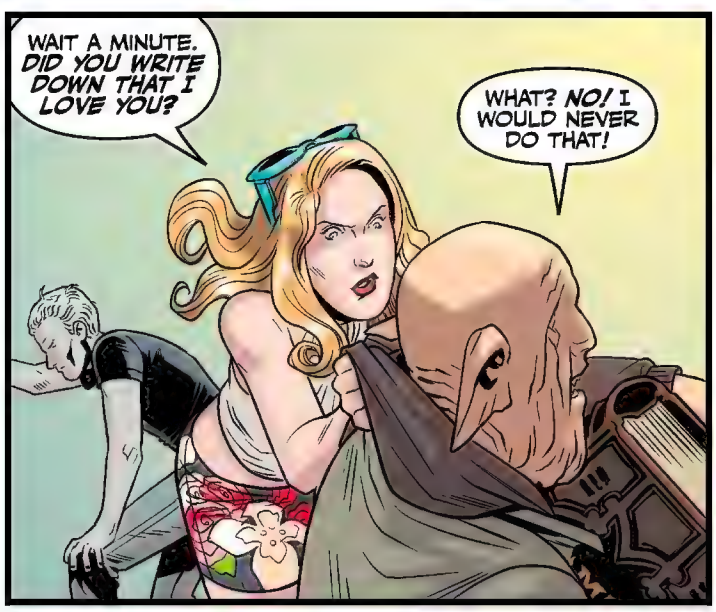

"OH! AND JUST TO SHOW I'M NOT SELFISH, AND BECAUSE THEY'LL NEVER FIGURE IT OUT ON THEIR OWN, BUFFY, SPIKE, AND ANGEL ALL FINALLY REALIZE THEY SHOULD CUT THE CRAP AND JUST LIVE TOGETHER IN A POLYGAMOUS, POLYAMOROUS MARRIAGE. I MEAN, COME ON, *WAKE UP*, PEOPLE!

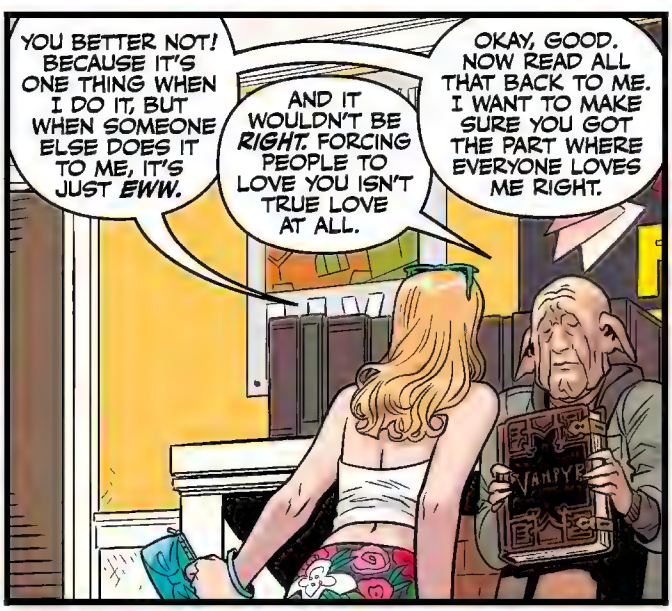

"NOW BACK TO ME. EVERYONE REALIZES I'M, LIKE, THE AWESOMEST AND SMARTEST AND PRETTIEST ONE THERE IS, AND WORSHIPS ME, AND DOES EXACTLY WHAT I SAY, AND DOESN'T DO ANYTHING TO ANNOY ME OR, LIKE, HURT MY FEELINGS.

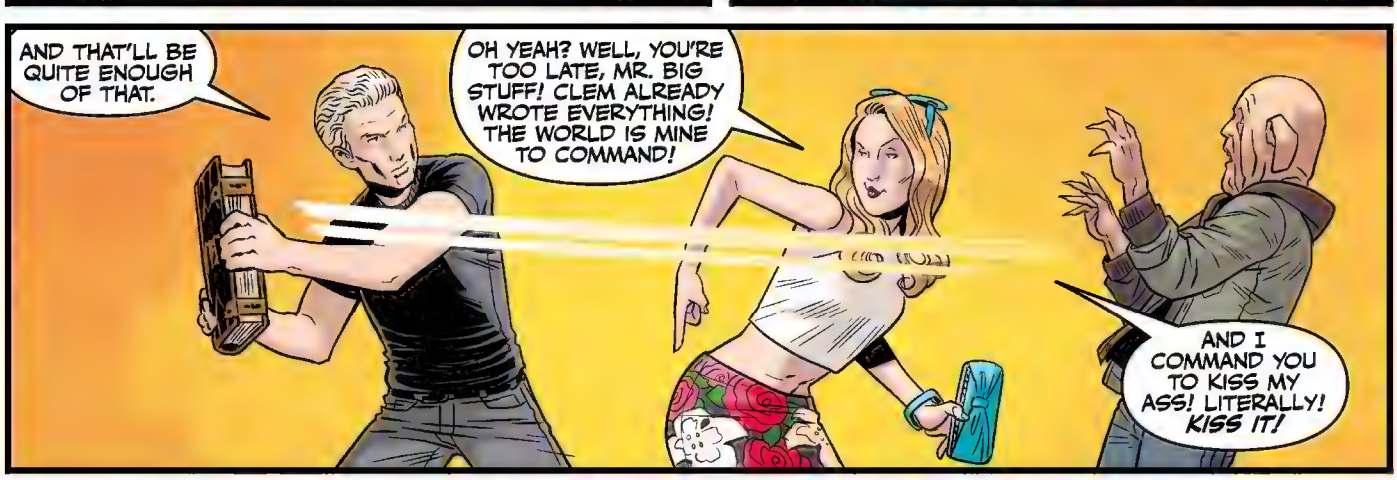

"AND ANY GUY I'M INTERESTED IN IS TOTALLY IN LOVE WITH ME, UNTIL I GET BORED WITH THEM. THEN THEY'RE STILL IN LOVE WITH ME BUT THEY GO AWAY AND CRY PRIVATELY. THEY DON'T, LIKE, STALK ME OR EMBARRASS ME. UNLESS, Y'KNOW, I WANT THEM TO.

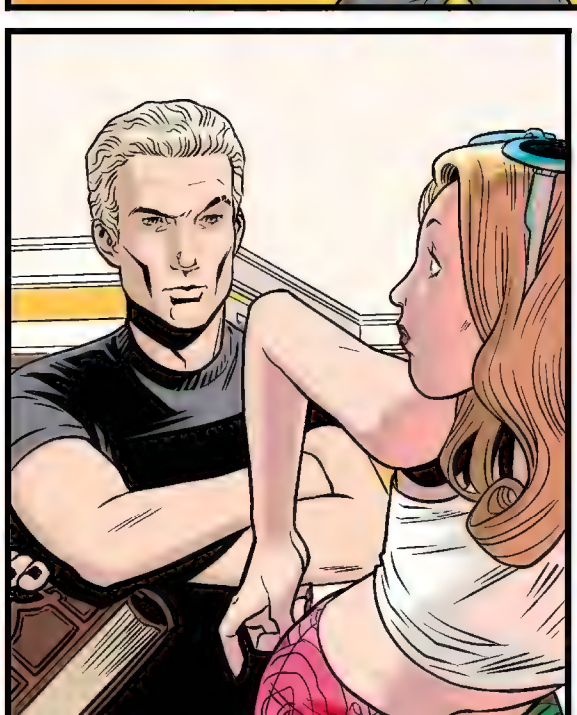

CLOSED
"AND ALL THE GIRLS ARE TOTES JEALOUS OF ME. THEY WANT TO BE LIKE ME, AND THEY TRY, BUT IT NEVER WORKS BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT ME, AND IT JUST BREAKS THEIR POOR LITTLE HEARTS. BUT DEEP DOWN THEY ALL LOVE ME TOO."

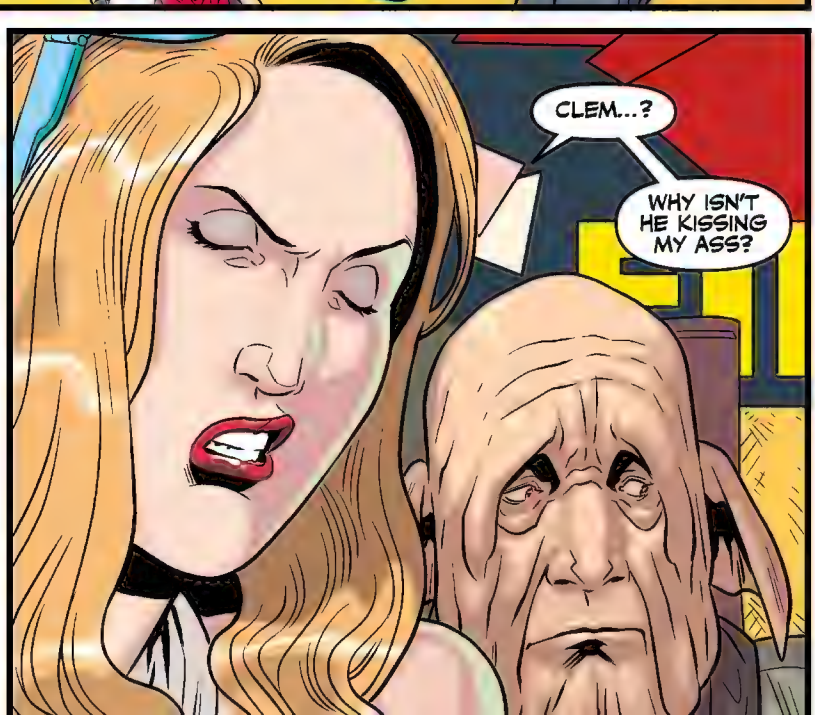

I THINK THAT'S THE IMPORTANT STUFF. ALL THE MAGIC CRAP WILL WORK ITSELF OUT.
DID YOU WRITE ALL THAT DOWN, CLEM? EVERY WORD I SAID, EXACTLY HOW I SAID IT?
UH, HARMONY... WE SHOULD TALK.


WAIT A MINUTE. DID YOU WRITE DOWN THAT I LOVE YOU?
WHAT? NO! I WOULD NEVER DO THAT!

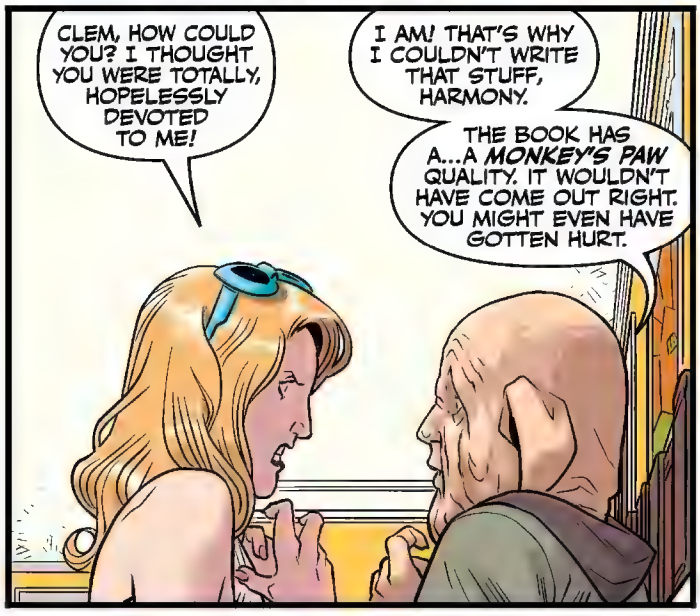

YOU BETTER NOT! BECAUSE IT'S ONE THING WHEN I DO IT, BUT WHEN SOMEONE ELSE DOES IT TO ME, IT'S JUST EWW.
AND IT WOULDN'T BE RIGHT. FORCING PEOPLE TO LOVE YOU ISN'T TRUE LOVE AT ALL.
OKAY, GOOD. NOW READ ALL THAT BACK TO ME. I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU GOT THE PART WHERE EVERYONE LOVES ME RIGHT.

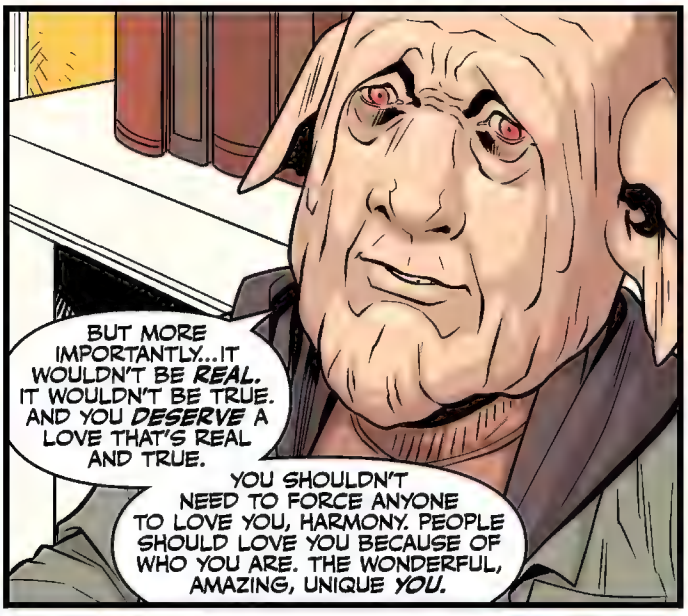

AND THAT'LL BE QUITE ENOUGH OF THAT.
OH YEAH? WELL, YOU'RE TOO LATE, MR. BIG STUFF! CLEM ALREADY WROTE EVERYTHING! THE WORLD IS MINE TO COMMAND!
AND I COMMAND YOU TO KISS MY ASS! LITERALLY! KISS IT!

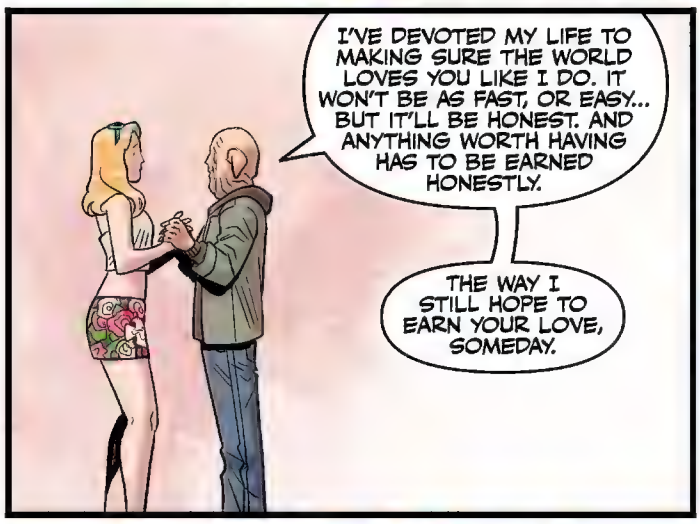


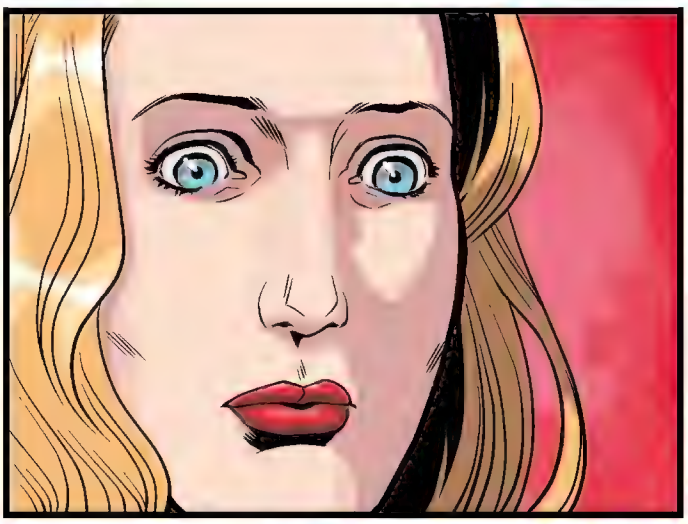

CLEM...?
WHY ISN'T HE KISSING MY ASS?

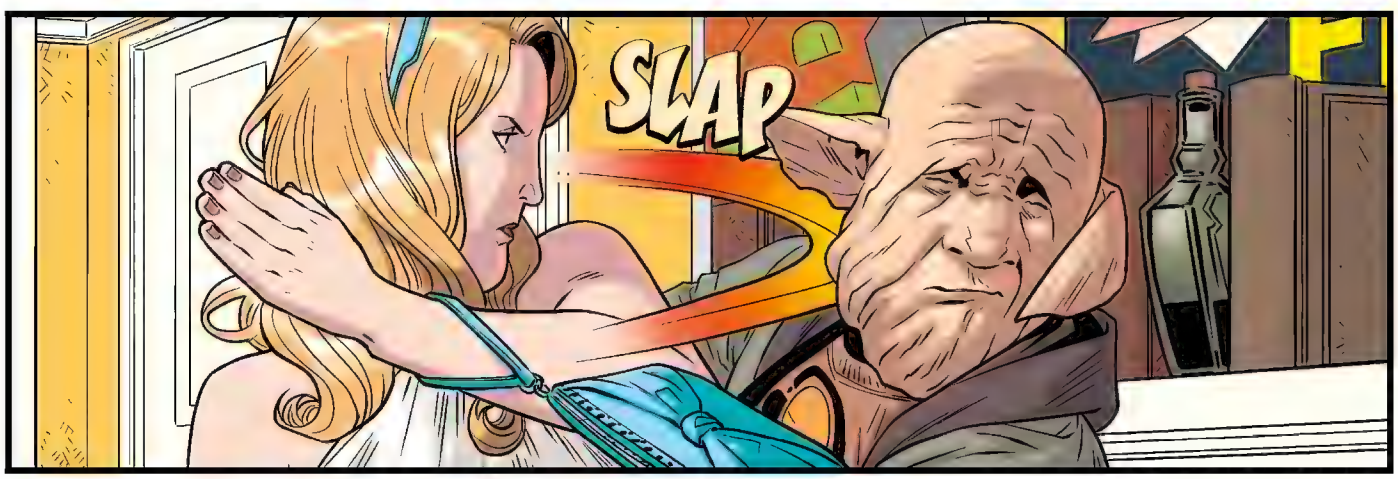
BECAUSE HE DIDN'T WRITE ANYTHING.
THAT'S WHY WE'RE MATES. CLEM MIGHT HAVE QUESTIONABLE TASTE IN WOMEN, BUT HE'S AT LEAST GOT A WHIT OF SENSE.

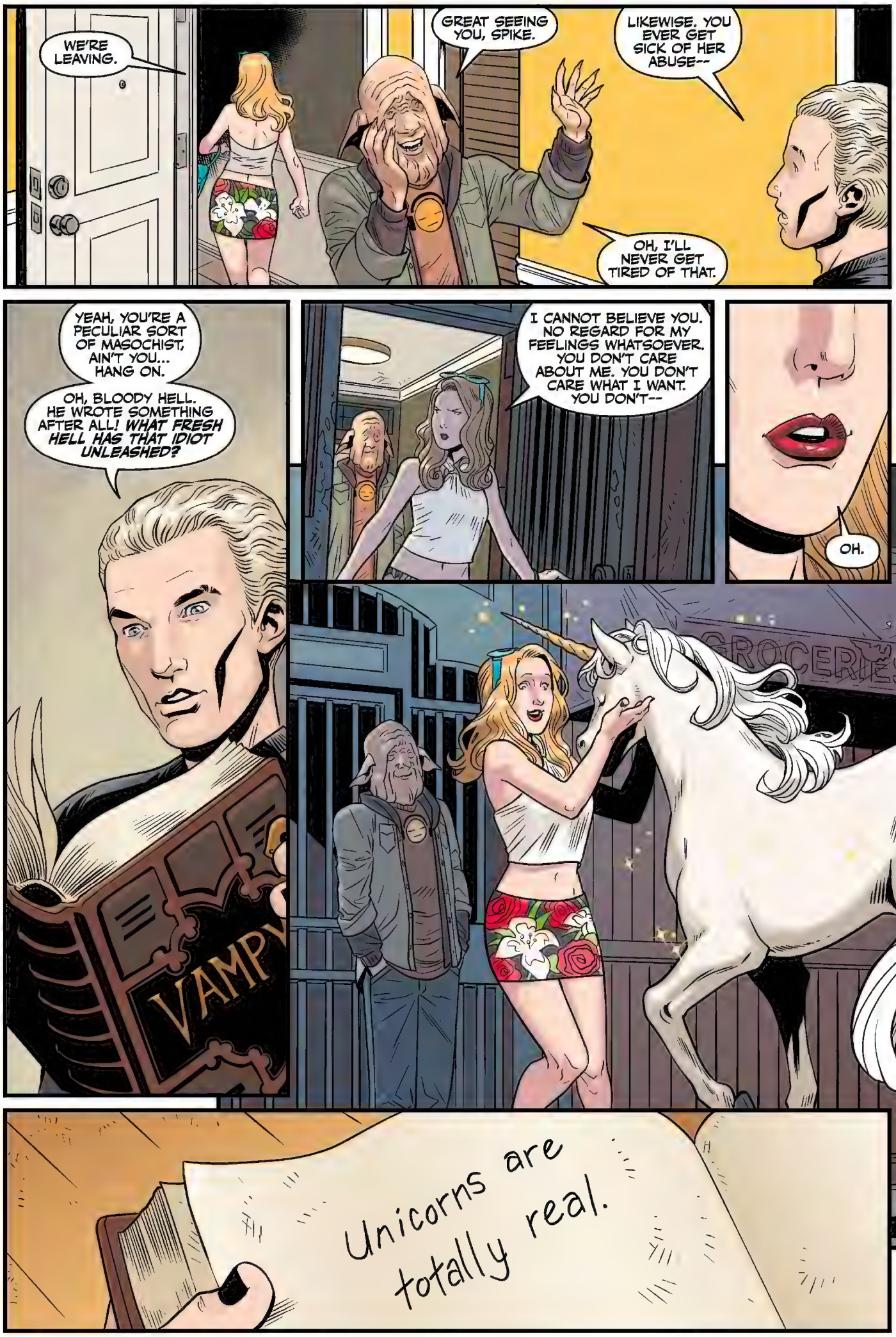

CLEM, HOW COULD YOU? I THOUGHT YOU WERE TOTALLY, HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO ME!
I AM! THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T WRITE THAT STUFF, HARMONY.
THE BOOK HAS A...A MONKEY'S PAW QUALITY. IT WOULDN'T HAVE COME OUT RIGHT. YOU MIGHT EVEN HAVE GOTTEN HURT.


BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY...IT WOULDN'T BE REAL. IT WOULDN'T BE TRUE. AND YOU DESERVE A LOVE THAT'S REAL AND TRUE.
YOU SHOULDN'T NEED TO FORCE ANYONE TO LOVE YOU, HARMONY. PEOPLE SHOULD LOVE YOU BECAUSE OF WHO YOU ARE. THE WONDERFUL, AMAZING, UNIQUE YOU.

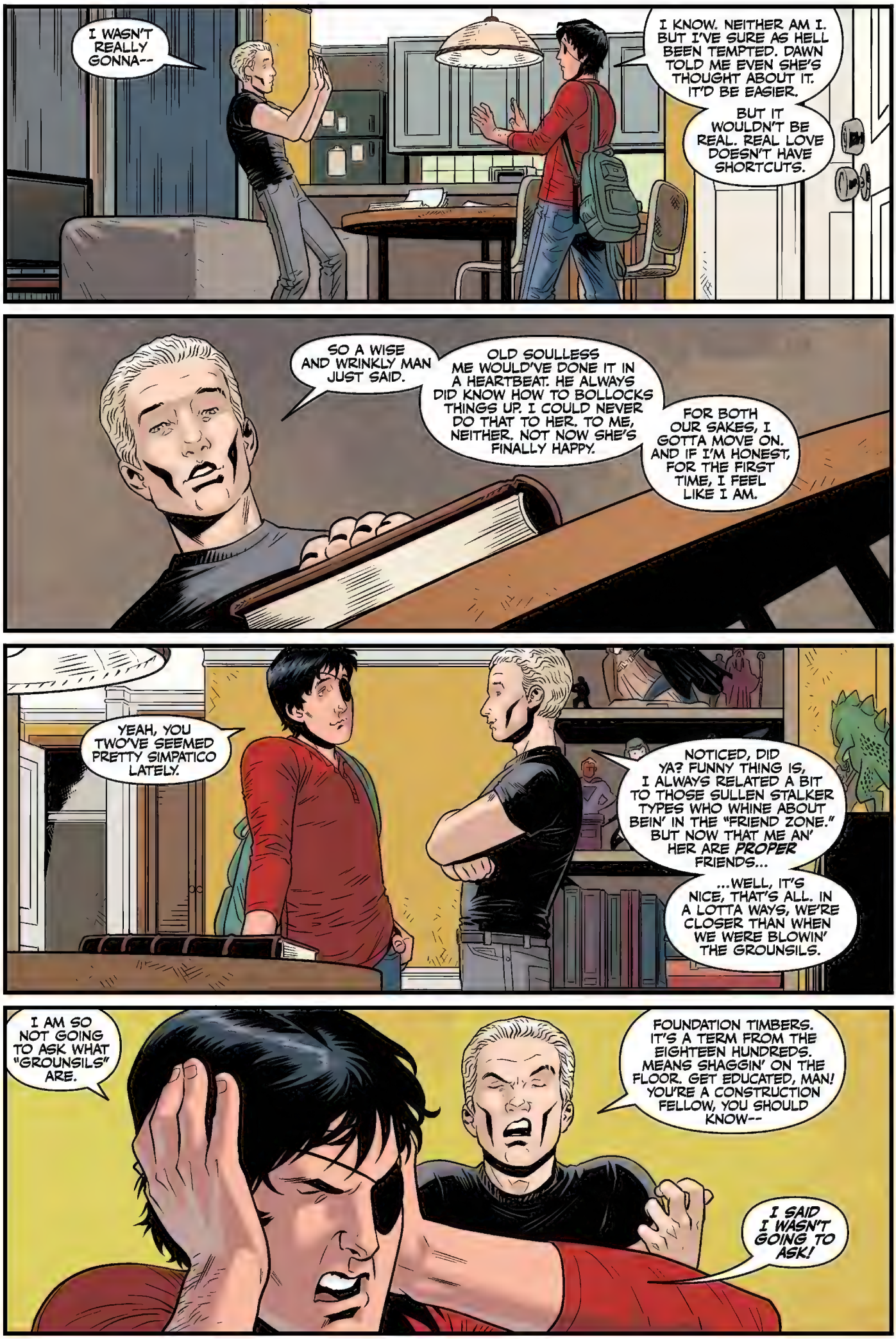

I'VE DEVOTED MY LIFE TO MAKING SURE THE WORLD LOVES YOU LIKE I DO. IT WON'T BE AS FAST, OR EASY... BUT IT'LL BE HONEST. AND ANYTHING WORTH HAVING HAS TO BE EARNED HONESTLY.
THE WAY I STILL HOPE TO EARN YOUR LOVE, SOMEDAY.

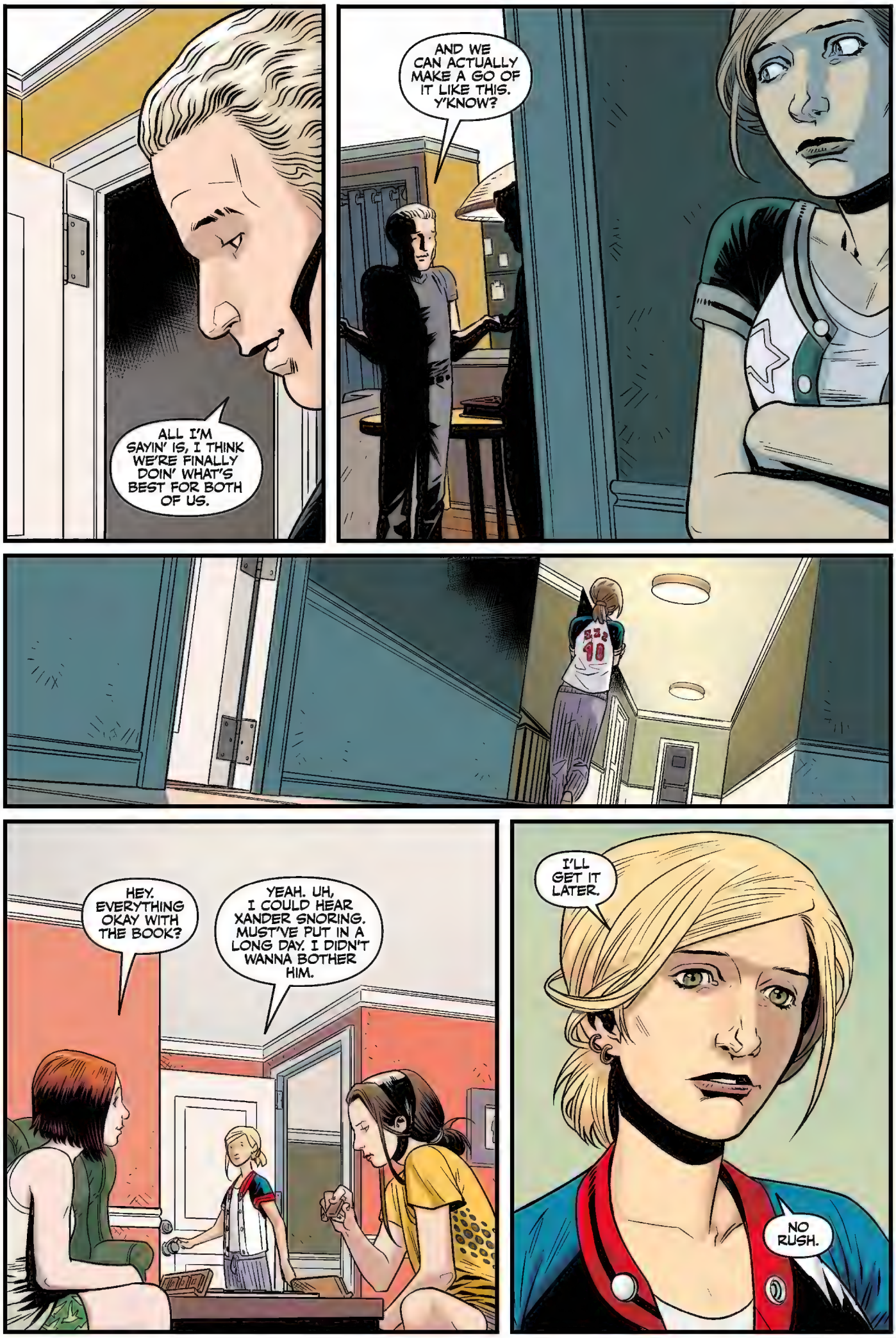



SLAP


WE'RE LEAVING.
GREAT SEEING YOU, SPIKE.
LIKEWISE. YOU EVER GET SICK OF HER ABUSE--
OH, I'LL NEVER GET TIRED OF THAT.
YEAH, YOU'RE A PECULIAR SORT OF MASOCHIST, AIN'T YOU... HANG ON.
OH, BLOODY HELL. HE WROTE SOMETHING AFTER ALL! WHAT FRESH HELL HAS THAT IDIOT UNLEASHED?
I CANNOT BELIEVE YOU. NO REGARD FOR MY FEELINGS WHATSOEVER. YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT ME. YOU DON'T CARE WHAT I WANT. YOU DON'T--
OH.
GROCERIES
Unicorns are totally real.

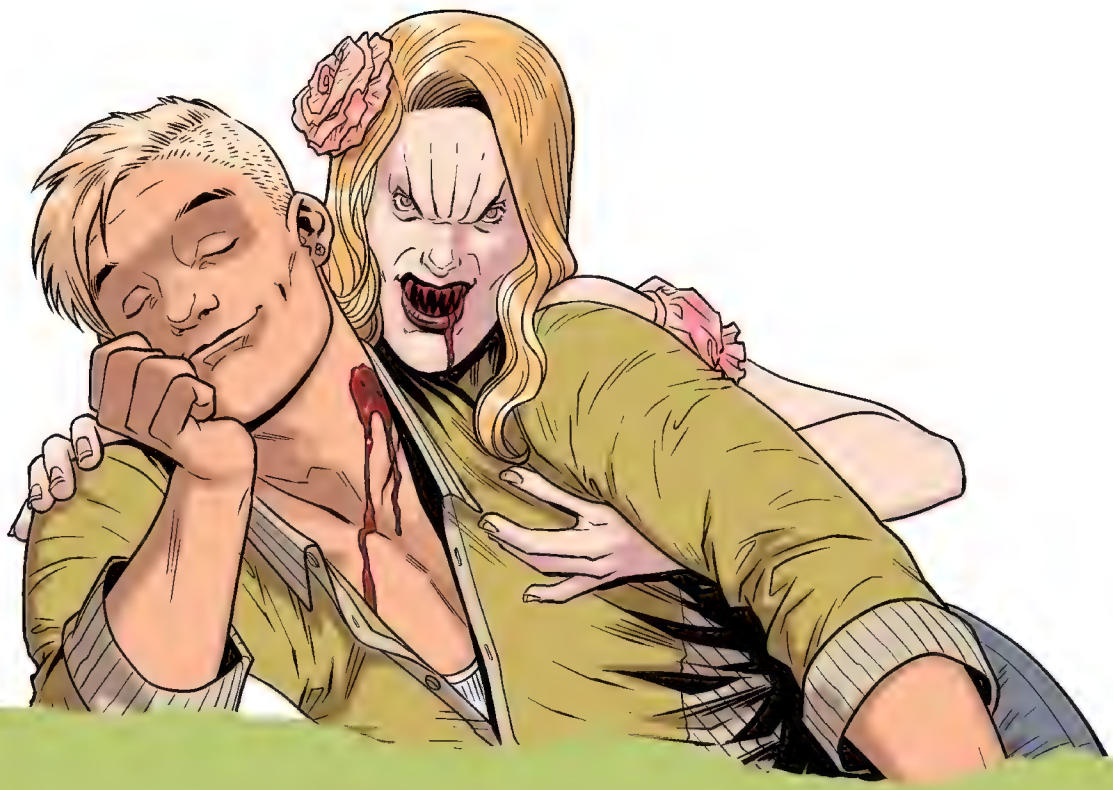
CLEM, YOU BLOODY SOFTY. WELL, I RECKON THE WORLD WILL SURVIVE.
WISH IT WAS ALWAYS THAT EASY.
"FULFILLING THE SHANSHU PROPHECY, WILLIAM THE BLOODY WAS RESTORED TO LIVING, HUMAN FORM. HE AND THE SLAYER DWELT TOGETHER IN LOVE AND HAPPINESS, FOREVER AFTER."
NOT BAD. IF YOU OVERLOOK THE MINOR HICCUP THAT IT DOESN'T GIVE ONE PARTY A CHOICE IN THE MATTER.
PESKY DETAILS, HUH?

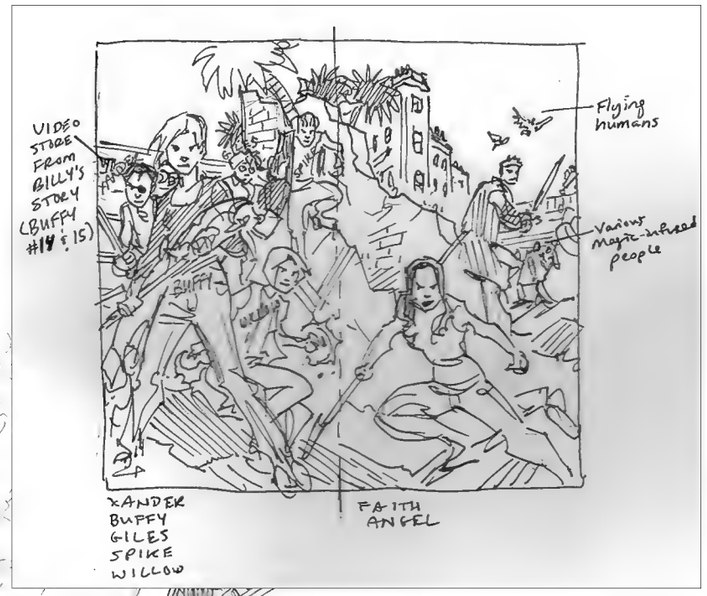

I WASN'T REALLY GONNA--
I KNOW. NEITHER AM I. BUT I'VE SURE AS HELL BEEN TEMPTED. DAWN TOLD ME EVEN SHE'S THOUGHT ABOUT IT. IT'D BE EASIER.
BUT IT WOULDN'T BE REAL. REAL LOVE DOESN'T HAVE SHORTCUTS.
SO A WISE AND WRINKLY MAN JUST SAID.
OLD SOULLESS ME WOULD'VE DONE IT IN A HEARTBEAT. HE ALWAYS DID KNOW HOW TO BOLLOCKS THINGS UP. I COULD NEVER DO THAT TO HER. TO ME, NEITHER. NOT NOW SHE'S FINALLY HAPPY.
FOR BOTH OUR SAKES, I GOTTA MOVE ON. AND IF I'M HONEST, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FEEL LIKE I AM.
YEAH, YOU TWO'VE SEEMED PRETTY SIMPATICO LATELY.
NOTICED, DID YA? FUNNY THING IS, I ALWAYS RELATED A BIT TO THOSE SULLEN STALKER TYPES WHO WHINE ABOUT BEIN' IN THE "FRIEND ZONE." BUT NOW THAT ME AN' HER ARE *PROPER* FRIENDS...
...WELL, IT'S NICE, THAT'S ALL. IN A LOTTA WAYS, WE'RE CLOSER THAN WHEN WE WERE BLOWIN' THE GROUNSILS.
I AM SO NOT GOING TO ASK WHAT "GROUNSILS" ARE.
FOUNDATION TIMBERS. IT'S A TERM FROM THE EIGHTEEN HUNDREDS. MEANS SHAGGIN' ON THE FLOOR. GET EDUCATED, MAN! YOU'RE A CONSTRUCTION FELLOW, YOU SHOULD KNOW--
I SAID I WASN'T GOING TO ASK!


ALL I'M SAYIN' IS, I THINK WE'RE FINALLY DOIN' WHAT'S BEST FOR BOTH OF US.
AND WE CAN ACTUALLY MAKE A GO OF IT LIKE THIS. Y'KNOW?
HEY. EVERYTHING OKAY WITH THE BOOK?
YEAH. UH, I COULD HEAR XANDER SNORING. MUST'VE PUT IN A LONG DAY. I DIDN'T WANNA BOTHER HIM.
I'LL GET IT LATER.
NO RUSH.

BLACK DIAMOND MINES, ANTIOCH, CA.
I FAIL TO COMPREHEND THE URGENCY OF ALL THIS.
I DO APPRECIATE THE REFRESHMENTS-- URRRP!--EXCUSE ME. AND THE NEED TO PUT ASIDE OUR DIFFERENCES IN THE FACE OF THE SLAYER POSSESSING THE MEANS TO SHAPE MAGIC ITSELF.
BUT EVEN WORKING TOGETHER, WE HAVE NO HOPE OF BEATING HER AND OUR OLD RIVAL.
YOU MISUNDERSTAND, MY DEAR MISTRESS. I AM PROPOSING WE REMAIN IN THE SHADOWS. WATCH...WAIT...AND ORCHESTRATE.
I AM THE SOUL GLUTTON. SUBTLETY IS NOT MY NATURE.
BUT YOU WANT REVENGE MORE THAN ANYTHING, DON'T YOU? YOU WON'T GET IT WITH A FRONTAL ASSAULT. MY PLAN WILL SERVE UP YOUR VENGEANCE ON A SILVER PLATTER.

WHY SHOULD WE HEED YOUR COUNSEL, SCULPTOR?
QUITE SIMPLY...
...UNDERSTANDING HOW THINGS FIT TOGETHER IS MY VOCATION, AND AVOCATION. I HAVE STUDIED OUR FOES CLOSELY.
THIS SLAYER HAS DEPARTED FROM THOSE OF THE PAST. RATHER THAN ISOLATE HERSELF, SHE HAS SURROUNDED HERSELF WITH LOVED ONES. AND, PARADOXICALLY, THIS HAS MADE HER STRONGER.
BUT WITH THE ARRIVAL OF OUR...OLD FRIEND... I BELIEVE THAT WHAT MADE HER STRONG BECOMES A WEAKNESS, GIVEN WHO SHE HAS ALLIED HERSELF WITH. I PROPOSE, FOR THE NONCE, THAT WE ALLOW OUR PROBLEMS TO SOLVE EACH OTHER.
I LIKE THIS. REGARDLESS OF WHO WINS, THE SURVIVOR WON'T EMERGE UNSCATHED.
YES. AND WE'LL HAVE MANEUVERED EVENTS TO OUR ADVANTAGE. WE'LL EAT THEM ALIVE.
OH, LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE. I'M HUNGRY AGAIN.
THAT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT, MY LADY.
I BROUGHT ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE.





For the first issues of Season 10, ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer*** and ***Angel & Faith***, artist Rebekah Isaacs—who was moving her talents from ***Angel & Faith*** to ***Buffy*** for Season 10—created a piece of art to be used as the ultravariant covers for both series' issue #1's. On these pages, you can see her initial sketch and pencils for the piece.

Cover art for the ultravariant issues of *Buffy* Season 10 #1 and *Angel & Faith* Season 10 #1, by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson.

Above: At the end of Season 9, Buffy's hair was chopped off by baddie Slayer Simone Doffler. To work out some ideas for how to style Buffy's new short 'do, new series artist Rebekah Isaacs created a few sketched options that we also used for our cover artists to reference. Throughout Season 10, Buffy's hair was a constantly changing/growing detail that many artists had to deal with! (I mean, a hair change for any of the Scoobies is an *event*—in joy *and* practicality!)

Variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #2 by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson.

To the right:
Thumbnail sketches with commentary from Rebekah for this issue #1 variant.

A

"New Rules" made me think of Back to School-- so Buffy getting bullied in a classroom full of vamps, holding up the Vampyr book.
(Higher angle would prob work best, to show the teacher in foreground is a vamp as well)

B

Tiny Buffy struggling to keep the Vampyr book shut as dozens of Tiny Vampires push their way out

C

The main crew (Willow, Buffy, Xander, and Dawn) cornered by vamps in a noticably sunlit showdown.

D

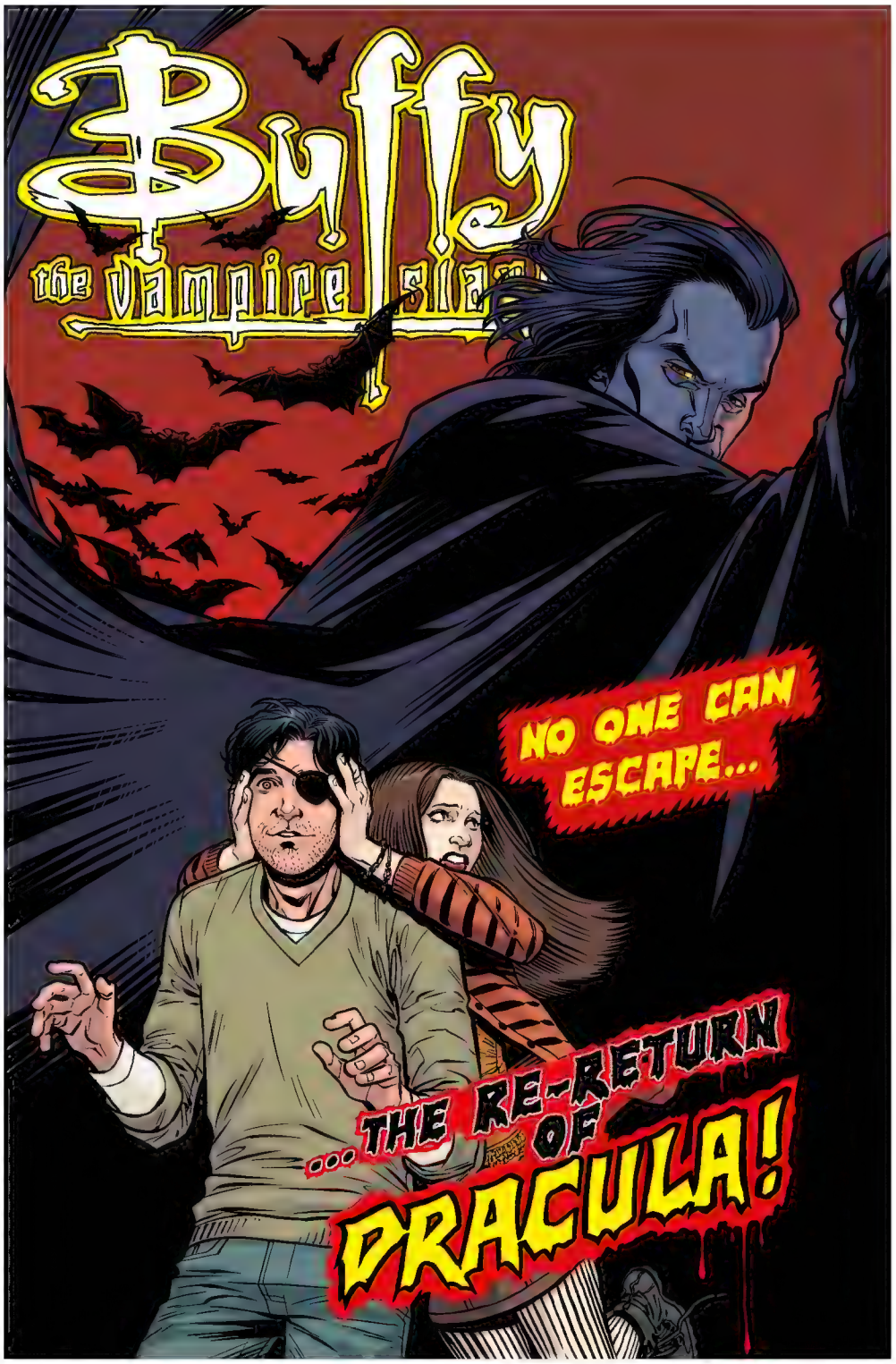
Buffy in an action figure blisterpack, looking freaked at the "New & Improved" Vampire figure packaged alongside. (I imagine that they would be in stiff toy-like poses, but the details in their faces and bodies would be life-like)

Exclusive cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #1 at Emerald City Comicon, by Phil Noto.

Exclusive cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #1 at WonderCon Anaheim, by Brian Horton.

Exclusive cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #2 at Chicago Comic & Entertainment Expo, by Aly Fell.

Variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #2 by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson.



Variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #3 by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson.

To the right:
Thumbnail sketches with commentary from Rebekah for this issue #3 Dracula-focused variant. Everyone was excited for the *re-return* of Dracula!

Pulp-horror-cover style, w/ Dawn (or Buffy) covering Xander's ears (or eyes) or trying to do both) to keep him from Drac's influence... dunh dunh DUNH!!

Alluding to Dracula's ability to will his powers into existence, he levitates in a yoga-style pose surrounded by circles of bats.

Xander holds Dawn, oblivious to her indifference, as a bat lands on his shoulder

Xander and Dawn holding hands but clearly troubled, w/ Dracula looming behind them

Variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #4 by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson.

A look at Rebekah's pencils and final inks for this dynamic issue #4 variant cover.

Variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #5 by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson.

To the right:
Thumbnail sketches with commentary from Rebekah for this issue #5 variant. Clearly we were focusing on the Scoobies' need to protect—and be protected from—the *Vampyr* book as new rules were being created.

The Book, in FG, glows ominously; Giles, Buffy & Will poised to attack

Same as Sketch B from cover #1, but w/ Will & Giles assisting

Giles, Will & Buffy surrounded by shadowy figures trying to get to the Book

Buffy, Giles & Willow protecting the Book, linking hands

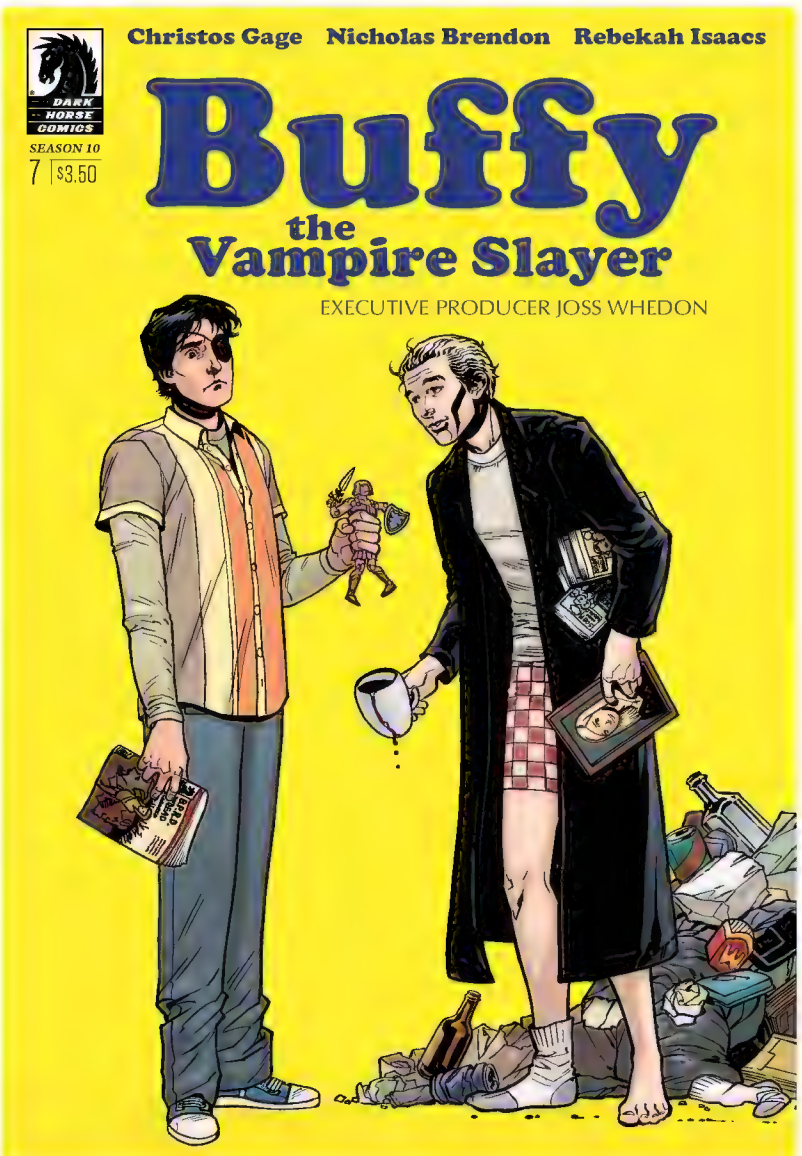
Exclusive cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #5 at San Diego Comic Convention, by Andy Park.

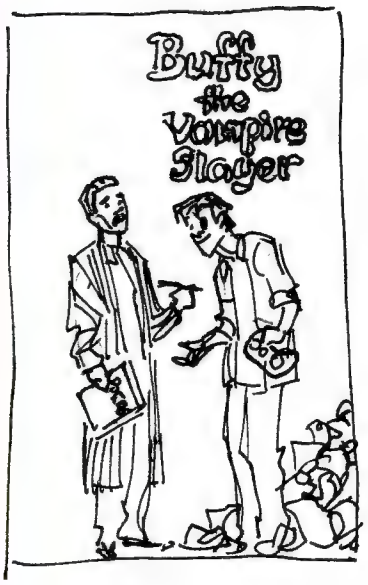
A

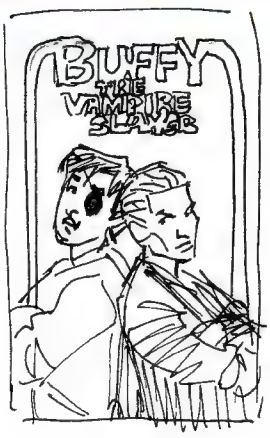
B

C

Thumbnail sketches and final variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #6, by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson, all showcasing the idea that even well-intentioned wishes (i.e. entries written into the *Vampyr* book) could bring terrible consequences. Dawn has said it more than once: "Monkey's paw!"



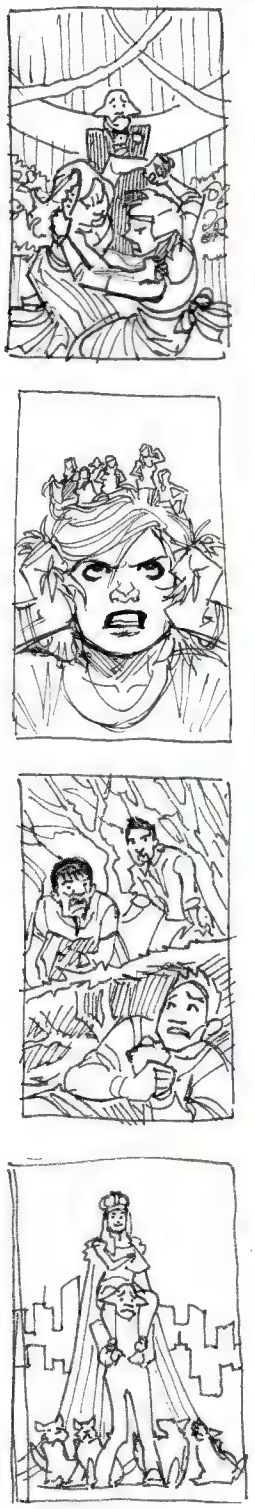




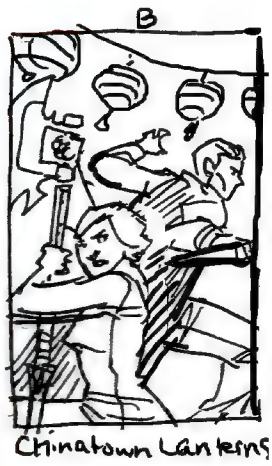
Variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #7 by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson, and design by Justin Couch.

Above and left:
Rebekah's thumbnail sketches for the variant—Spike and Xander once again becoming roomies was absolutely worth being celebrated on a cover.

Cover art for the special Halloween issue, *Buffy* Season 10 #8, by Steve Morris. The Soul Glutton—appearing mostly on the back half of this wraparound cover—was designed by Richard Corben for the special three-page flashback sequence in this issue.



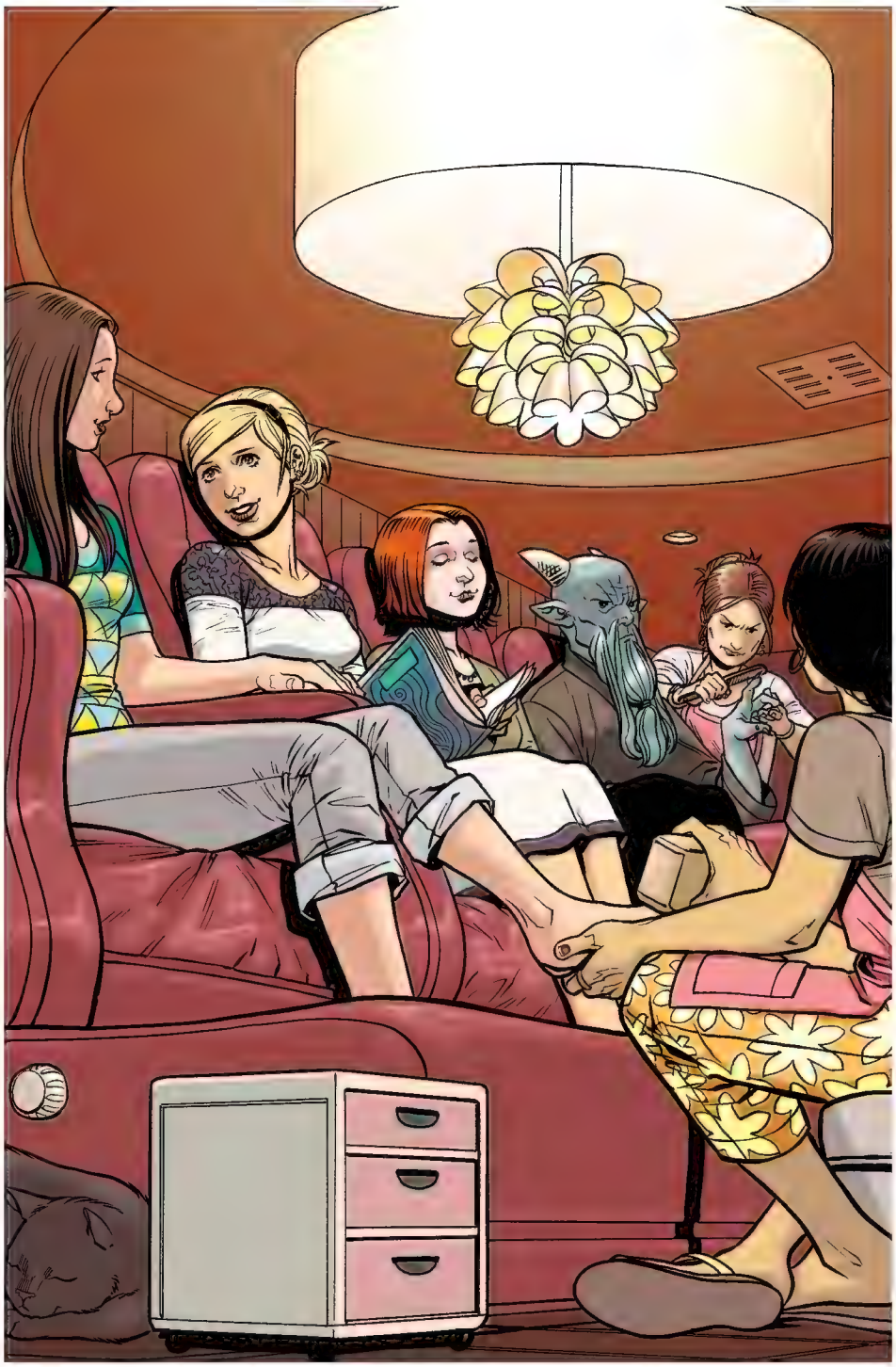
Thumbnail sketches and fully designed variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #8 by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson, and design by Justin Couch. Despite Harmony not actually being a part of issue #8, this variant became one of our funnest variant covers of the season! (Yes, "funnest.")



Variant cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 #9, by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson.

To the right:
Thumbnail sketches with short commentary from Rebekah for this issue #9 variant, showcasing Spike and Buffy ready for action in San Francisco settings!

Cover sketch and cover pencils *Buffy* Season 10 #9, by Steve Morris (final colored art is shown on page 198 of this volume). A lovely and subtle look at our characters and their changing relationships.



Variant cover art for ***Buffy*** Season 10 #10, by Rebekah Isaacs with Dan Jackson.

To the right:
Thumbnail sketches from Rebekah for this issue #10 variant. Buffy needed a spa day and who better to tag along for this variant than D'Hoffryn, who kept popping by the Scoobies' apartments? It was a tough choice between D'Hoffryn grumpily receiving a manicure/pedicure (A, C), and D'Hoffryn looking uncomfortable in the sauna (B).

Cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 Volume 1: *New Rules*, by Steve Morris.

Cover art for *Buffy* Season 10 Volume 2: *I Wish*, by Steve Morris.

CREATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Writer, producer, and director **JOSS WHEDON** began writing feature films and acting as a "script doctor" in the 1990s. He introduced the character for which he is most well known in his script for the original *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* film (1992).

In 1997 Whedon founded Mutant Enemy Productions so that he could coproduce the television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. The series ran from 1997 to 2003, giving birth to Whedon's cult-like fan following, and led to a spinoff series, *Angel*, as well as comics series based on both shows. In 2002, Whedon produced and wrote the television series *Firefly*, which eventually led to a feature film titled *Serenity* (2005), as well as more comics. In 2008, Whedon produced and cowrote, with his brothers Zack and Jed Whedon, and Maurissa Tancharoen, the Emmy-winning online series *Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog*—again leading to a comics series. Also alongside Jed Whedon and Tancharoen, Whedon produced the television show *Dollhouse*, which premiered in 2009. His most recently produced television work, which he cocreated with Jed Whedon and Tancharoen in 2013, is *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* He wrote and directed one of the most ambitious and successful feature films to date: *The Avengers*, based on the Marvel Comics superhero team, along with its sequel, *Avengers: Age of Ultron*. He also directed, produced, and composed original music for a film adaptation of the Shakespeare play *Much Ado about Nothing*.

Comics written by Whedon include *Fray* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Seasons 8 and 9, and *Sugarshock*, all for Dark Horse Comics, and *Runaways* and *Astonishing X-Men* for Marvel Comics. Currently he is co-writing both a Buffy spin-off series featuring the character Giles with writer Erika Alexander, and *Buffy* Season 12 with writer Christos Gage.

NICHOLAS BRENDON is an American writer and actor. He is best known for playing the character Xander Harris in the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* television series (1997–2003). He has played a variety of television and movie roles over the years, including notable television roles on CBS's *Criminal Minds*, ABC's *Private Practice*, and Fox's *Kitchen Confidential*. In 2014, Brendon began working with Christos Gage in co-writing several issues of the *Buffy* Season 10 comics series, contributing in particular to issues that focused on Brendon's character, Xander.

Award–winning illustrator and comic book artist **RICHARD CORBEN** was born on a farm in Anderson, Missouri, and went on to receive a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Kansas City Art Institute. After working as a professional animator, Corben began creating underground comics, including *Grim Wit*, *Slow Death*, *Skull*, *Rowlf*, *Fever Dreams*, and his own anthology *Fantagor*. In 1970, Corben began illustrating stories for Warren Publishing; these horror and science fiction stories appeared in *Creepy*, *Eerie*, *Vampirella*, *1984*, and *Comix International*. Corben went on to be published in *Métal Hurlant* in France, the magazine created by Mœbius, Druillet, and Jean-Pierre Dionnet, and more of his works were also published in the American cousin of the magazine, *Heavy Metal*. From 1986 to 1994, Corben operated his own publishing imprint, Fantagor Press, where his titles *Den*, *Den Saga*, *Rip in Time*, and more, were published. Since then, Corben has done comics work for mainstream comics publishers, Marvel, DC, IDW, and Dark Horse Comics. Among his awards, in 2012, he was elected to the Will Eisner Award Hall of Fame, and in 2018, he received the prestigious Grand Prix at Angoulême.

New York Times bestselling author **CHRISTOS GAGE** is a writer of comics, television, movies, graphic novels, and video games. In addition to writing the award–nominated *Angel & Faith*, and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Seasons 10, 11, and currently, 12, for Dark Horse Comics, he has provided scripts for a number of comics publishers, comics titles including *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Iron Man*, *Avengers Academy*, and graphic novels

including *Area 10*, and *Sunset*. Gage has written for a variety of televisions shows, including *Daredevil*, *Law & Order: SVU*, and *Numb3rs*. His resume of film titles include *The Breed*, and *Paradox*, and his video games include Marvel's *Spider-Man*, and *Captain America: Super Soldier*. Gage is a graduate of Brown University and the American Film Institute, from which he received a master's in screenwriting. He often collaborates with his wife, Ruth Fletcher Gage.

Artist **REBEKAH ISAACS**, a graduate of the Savannah College of Art and Design, got her start in comics drawing *The After Hours* for the *Twilight Zone* series of graphic novels from Walker & Co. Soon after, she began as a guest artist on *Hack/Slash* for Devil's Due Publishing before working as a series artist on *Drafted* (Desperado/IDW Publishing) and a *Sheena* miniseries for Devil's Due. Her first mainstream work was a fill-in issue of *Ms. Marvel* with writer Brian Reed for Marvel Comics, immediately followed by WildStorm Comics' miniseries revival of *DV8: Gods and Monsters* with writer Brian Wood. Since then, she has worked on titles including *DMZ* (Vertigo/DC Comics), *Magus* (12 Gauge Comics), and *Captain America and the Falcon* (Marvel). She began her work in illustrating the Buffyverse with *Angel & Faith* and continued as series artist on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Seasons 10 and, most recently, Season 11. A native of Dahlonega, Georgia, Rebekah now lives in New York. She loves Leia Organa, Bowie, and all the cats in the world.

Best known for his work in the *Buffy* universe, comic artist **KARL MOLINE**'s first project with series creator Joss Whedon was the 2003 miniseries *Fray*, from Dark Horse Comics, set in the future of Buffy's world. With the canonical return of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* in comics with Season 8, Moline was brought in to draw a *Buffy/Fray* crossover arc, as well as a *Willow* one-shot and a *Riley* one-shot. His other work for Dark Horse includes a *B.P.R.D.: War on Frogs* one-shot in 2008 and the miniseries *B.P.R.D.: The Dead Remembered* in 2011. Moline has also done work for other comics publishers, such as Marvel Comics (including *Avengers Academy*, *The Loners: The Secret Lives of Super Heroes*, *Spider-Man Unlimited*, *X-Factor*, and *X-Men*). Most recently in the *Buffy* universe, Moline has created illustrations for the *Buffy* adult coloring books from Dark Horse Comics, released in 2016 and 2017.

Brazilian artist **CLIFF RICHARDS** is best known for his work on the original Dark Horse *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* comics series that ran from 1998 to 2003, while the television series was still on the air. Over the years, Richards has also drawn for DC Comics' *Birds of Prey* and *Wonder Woman* and for Marvel Comics' *Rogue*, *Excalibur*, and *New Thunderbolts*, among many other titles. Richards was also the artist for the comics series *Dollhouse*, a five-issue supplement to the television series from creator Joss Whedon, various issues of *Buffy* Seasons 9–10 and *Angel & Faith* Season 10, and the graphic novel adaptation of the novel *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*.

DARK HORSE BOOKS

executive producer
JOSS WHEDON

CHRISTOS GAGE
NICHOLAS BRENDON
REBEKAH ISAACS
RICHARD CORBEN
KARL MOLINE
CLIFF RICHARDS

Buffy the Vampire Slayer™

SEASON 10 VOLUME 1

The cult-favorite television series from creator Joss Whedon continues in comics with Season 10, where Buffy and the Scoobies are rewriting the rules of magic and monsters . . .

While slaying the zompires that have overrun a small California town, Buffy and her pals are shocked to discover another new kind of vampire: harder to kill, able to transform, and walk in the light of day—like Dracula . . . If that weren't enough, the rules of magic are literally being rewritten in the *Vampyr* book. The crew attempts to restore the status quo, all while Xander is the victim of a haunting, his relationship with Dawn begins to crumble, and Dracula himself enters the picture. Then when the *Vampyr* book goes missing—now a highly coveted item—Buffy and the Scoobies head for what might be a disaster in Sunnydale where Andrew is up to his good/bad/old tricks again. As everyone feels the responsibility of protecting the book and writing the new magical rules, they are tempted by what new rules can do for them . . . just like the Big Bads who have come knocking on Buffy's door!

Writers Christos Gage (*Angel & Faith*) and *Buffy* star Nicholas Brendon team with artist Rebekah Isaacs (*Angel & Faith*) to take on the Slayer and her teammates in her tenth season; they're joined by guest artists Richard Corben (*Hellboy*), Karl Moline (*Fray*), and Cliff Richards (*Dollhouse*)!

This Library edition collects the first two arcs of Buffy *Season 10 and includes an expanded sketchbook section.*

"GREAT PACING, PLENTY OF HUMOR, AND AN EMOTIONAL END. QUINTESSENTIAL *BUFFY* COMIC."
—Comic Book Therapy

"An A+ accomplishment on all accounts, and the fandom couldn't have asked for a better creative team behind the pages."
—Bloody Disgusting

"Dark Horse has brought their A-game talent to this comic, and it shows. An excellent debut that fans should be appropriately ecstatic over."
—Comic Book Resources

"Why can't we quit *Buffy* comics? It's because they are still just too cool."
—Pop Matters

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